PLAY METER Magazine

VOLUME 23, No. 1 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT/FEC INDUSTRY JANUARY 1997

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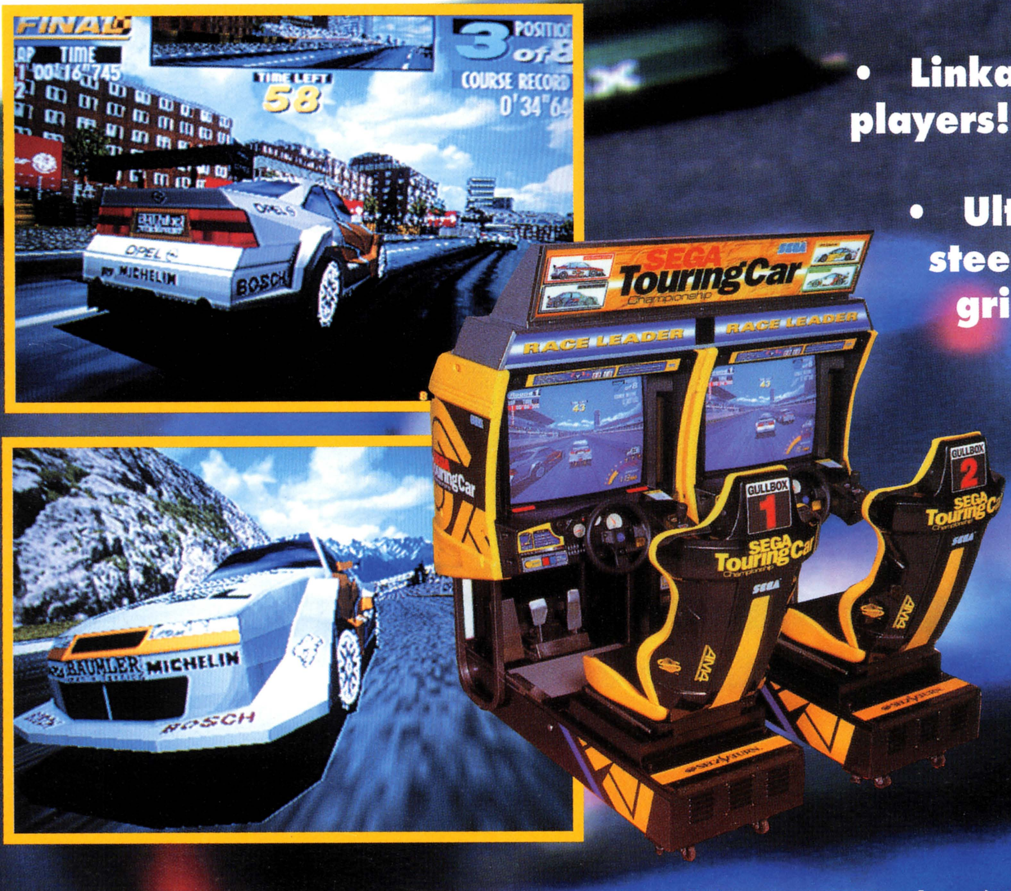
FINAL
LAP TIME
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News BULLETIN

PC GIANTS LAY OUT PLAN FOR COIN-OP FUTURE

At a confidential meeting held last month, executives from Intel and Microsoft met with more than 100 representatives from the coin-op industry to lay out specifics of a proposed PC-based game platform.

Speakers included three vice presidents from Intel, signaling the company's commitment to the coin-op market. A preliminary specification for the proposed coin-op platform, including CPU, disc size, and RAM, was presented. But officials at Microsoft and Intel have not commented publicly on the details of the specification or any other aspect of the meeting.

Attendees—including most of the major coin-op manufacturers, several PC game publishers, and even a representative of NANI—were also sworn to secrecy and required to sign a non-disclosure agreement barring them from discussing any details of the presentation.

The crux of the message was not unlike what has already been discussed publicly: that 3-D technology currently being developed in the PC market can be used advantageously by the coin-op and location-based entertainment (LBE) industries to increase profitability. This is made possible by the common design elements inherent in an open platform and the opportunities for integrated marketing with the home game business.

The impetus for delivering the message last month was a newly developed 3-D platform and the promise of new multimedia technologies from Microsoft and Intel that will reportedly catch up and surpass the performance of dedicated hardware in the next few years.

Implementing a scaleable platform that incorporates the game industry from top to bottom (PC to LBE) will deliver a tenfold system-wide price/performance ratio improvement in three years, attendees at the meeting were told. Such a scaleable platform would include mainstream home computers, high-end home computers that could also be used for low-end coin-op games, and high-end coin-op and LBE game platforms.

Under this scenario, coin-op and LBE would become the proving grounds for 3-D technology and leading edge content before it migrated to the home PC. As part of this model for success, the industry would be able to leverage brand name recognition from coin-op in the home market, as well as work out any problems through user feedback at the pay-for-play level.

As a way of supporting this, Intel briefly discussed a plan that would provide early availability of development systems, favorable pricing for deployment systems, technical support, and co-marketing to the coin-op and LBE industries.

As one operator, who was not at the meeting but has been following the issue closely, put it: "In the best of all worlds, I would be able to purchase next year's $3,000 hardware for $2,000 this year."

Another issue raised at last month's meeting was the need for an open platform and the abstraction of software development, which runs in longer cycles than hardware development. Abstraction would allow developers to run their games on the hardware most suited to their software, not the one they "chose" at the beginning of the development cycle.

Abstraction, which can be achieved through the use of Microsoft's DirectX, would usher in a new business model allowing games to support last year's and next year's standard hardware. It makes sense, according to members of the PC industry, even if a coin-op company continues to develop dedicated hardware because it lets developers "choose" their hardware after the game is completed.

Microsoft and Intel will reportedly be following up with manufacturers who attended the meeting, seeking to find companies that will partner with them in implementing their plan. Software for the proposed platform is expected by the second half of this year. (Look for more on this issue in next month's edition.)

AMOA RESTRUCTURES ITS WASHINGTON OFFICE

The management firm which provides administrative staff for the Amusement and Music Operators Association will no longer represent the association in Washington, D.C., reports AMOA government relations committee chairman Jim Stansfield.

However, Stansfield said the association had not totally closed the door on Smith Bucklin's Washington office. "If an issue were to come up and we needed them we would go back to them," he said.

In the meantime, AMOA's affairs in the nation's capitol will be overseen by Wayne Vallis with the lobbying firm Vallis & Associates, which was brought on board several years ago to help move the legislative ball during debate over the dollar coin proposal.

Attempts to pass dollar coin in 1995 were unsuccessful, despite a GOP takeover of Congress, which was expected to bode well for the coin-op industry's longstanding legislative agenda.

"We can't afford to keep two or three people in Washington and get these kinds of results," Stansfield said. "It's very frustrating."

Smith Bucklin also manages AMOA's main office in Chicago, and a number of AMOA officers said the decision to use Vallis in Washington in no way affects the association's relationship with Smith Bucklin in Chicago.

JKR/CHILDROBICS MERGER COMPLETE

The now-complete merger of Just Kiddie Rides and Childrobics will allow the two companies to offer one of the widest arrays of products and services for the amusement industry: kiddie rides, soft modular play, videos, redemption

News BULLETIN

games, and more. On Dec. 16 the combined company moved into a new 40,000-square-foot facility at 1745 Expressway Drive North, Hauppage, NY 11788; (800)858-7433 or (516)851-0055; fax (516)850-0501.

INCREDIBLE TECH. SETS GOALS

Incredible Technologies' New Year's resolution is to continue developing reasonably priced games for street locations with a strong leaning toward tournament capability. The company is moving forward with its International Tournament System version of *Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee 3D Golf* in tournaments hosted monthly around the country. The company reports that over 1,200 dedicated units of the game have been sold through distribution and more than $100,000 has been awarded to players in over 40 states. A new kit upgrade is now available with three redesigned 18-hole golf courses and extra audit pages for the game's test mode that will assist in operator-run tournaments.

In addition, a tournament version of *World Class Bowling* is in the testing phase with 20 dedicated games in Chicago-area locations. The game will be available through distributors in a dedicated by the spring. The company also has a Web site (www.itsgames.com) that affords general information on the company along with details on current tournament leaders and upcoming events.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/ADDRESS CHANGES

A number of companies have made significant changes, among them:

- **Great American Billiards** has changed its name to Great American Recreation Equipment Inc., to better reflect its diversified and expanded product line that includes two styles of pool tables (four models), a kiddie pool table, Action Soccer foosball table, adult-themed Power Hockey and Jr. Power Hockey, and a selection of conversion cabinets such as the 34-inch pedestal Showcase and 27-inch upright. Great American advises that more innovative products are being readied for the ASI show in March. The company has two toll-free numbers: (800)654-7328 or (800)831-2011
- **Multi Products Co. Inc.** has moved to a new shipping and shop facility at 5301 21st St., Racine, WI 53406; (414)554-3700; fax (414)554-3711; E-mail (m.products@aol.com). Billing and correspondence should be directed to P.O. Box 081038, Racine, WI 53408.
- **Quick Silver Development Co. Inc.** has relocated to 5100 Convair Drive, Carson City, NV 89706; (702)888-8100; fax (702)888-8111.
- **Greystone Technology** has new headquarters at 4950 Murphy Canyon Road, San Diego, CA 92123; (619)974-6300; fax (619)974-6303.
- **CashCode** has appointed two new Canadian distributors: Laniel Canada Inc. and META-4 Systems Corp. Both are headquartered in St.-Laurent, Quebec, and will be responsible for the sales and service of Cash Code's line of bill validators throughout Canada. Laniel has been serving the industry since 1935; its representatives are Dennis Desmarais and Jocelyn Blais, (514)336-5050, ext. 215 and 217. META-4 was founded in 1981; the CashCode contact there is Domenic Giaccari, (514)337-4212
- **PlayNet** (formerly Aristo) has finalized its sales team to consist of Bill Cravens, senior vice president of sales; Frank Ballouz, vice president of international sales; Paul Wideraenders and Brian Duke, regional sales managers.
- **Melanie Krisza Marano**, former manager of the Jukebox License Office, has joined SESAC as a national account executive for the general licensing department.

INDUSTRY MOURNS ROSENTHAL

Industry members were saddened to hear of the death of Herb Rosenthal, former manager of Banner Specialty Co., who passed away after battling recent health problems. Lou Larson of Betson Pittsburgh Distributing worked with Herb for eight years. Lou said, "I will always remember his great sense of humor, his cordial way with people, and the kind way he always treated me and my family. Herb had a tremendous business reputation and a solid staff of people that, to this day, are a by-product of the organization that Herb built back in the '70s. It certainly is a lasting tribute to Herb to have so many people that worked for him still succeeding. He will be missed and remembered fondly by all who had the opportunity to know him, and especially by his close associates in the business who can appreciate his long-lasting impact on them." Herb is survived by his wife Louise and son Mark. Sympathy cards may be sent to 2328 Marbury Road, Churchill, PA 15221; remembrances in his name can be made to the Herbert R. and Richard H. Rosenthal Philanthropic Fund, c/o U.J.F. of Pittsburgh, or the National Cancer Institute ▲

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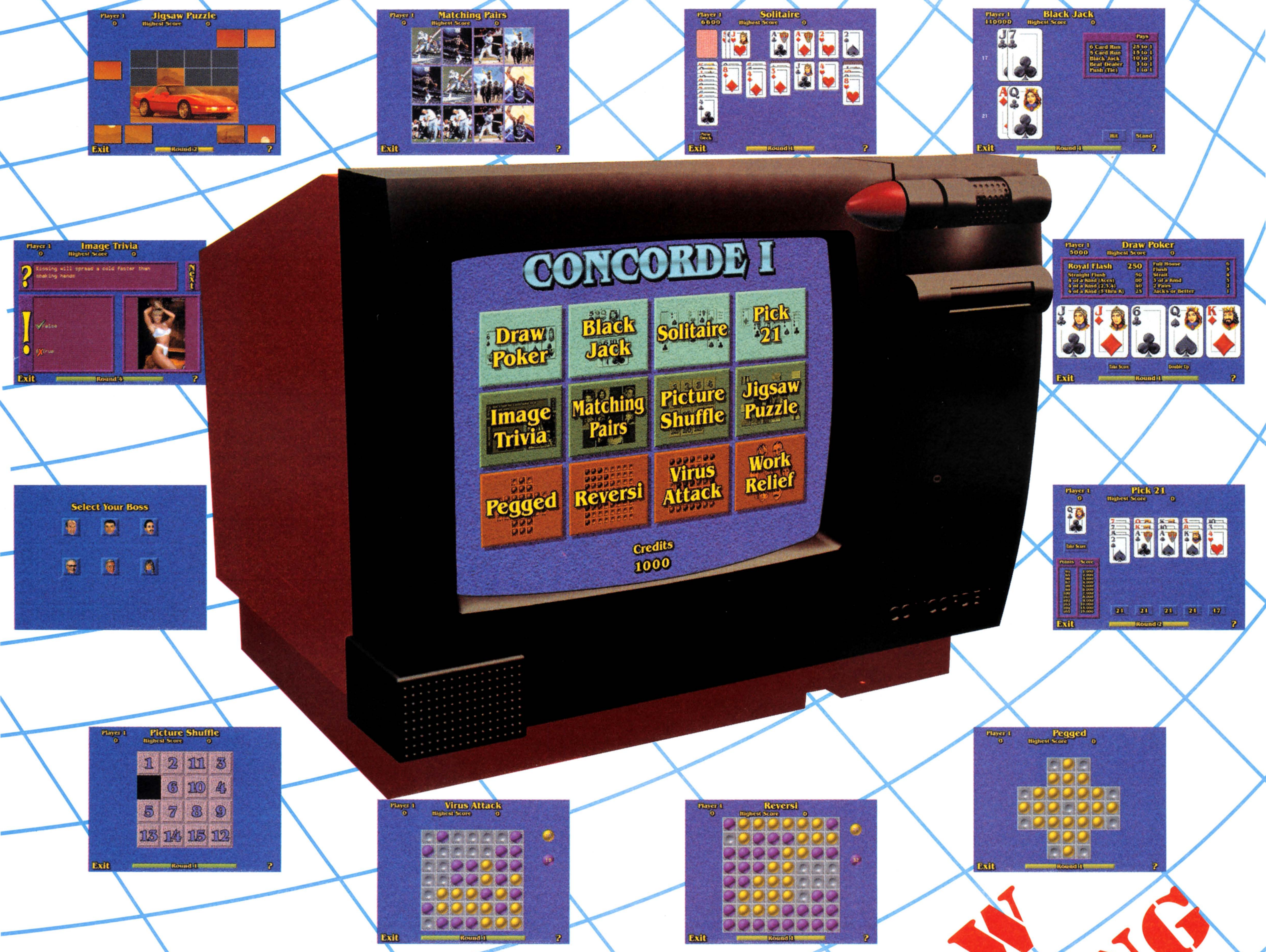
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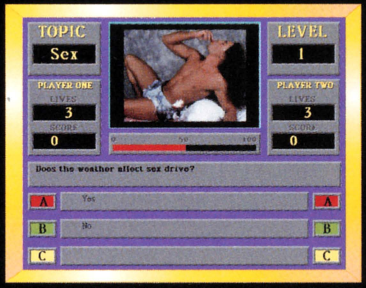

TOPIC
Sex
LEVEL
1
PLAYER ONE
LIVES
3
SCORE
0
PLAYER TWO
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3
SCORE
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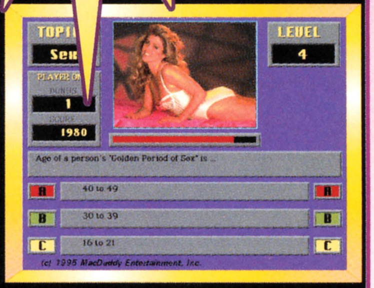
0
50
100
A
B
C

Does the weather affect sex drive?

A Yes

B No

C



TOPI
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4
PLAYER ON
BONUS
1
SCORE
1980
A
B
C

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B 30 to 39

C 16 to 21

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IAAPA '96

"This is meant to be a celebration of who we are and what we do," said Geoffrey Thompson of his association's 78th international showcase of all elements pertaining to theme parks and family entertainment centers. Idea seekers had a field day in terms of games and rides, food and beverages, and play equipment and new technologies.

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HIGH TECH REVISITED

Hold on to your lasers! Not since the last IAAPA convention and trade show has there been as extensive an outlay of galloping technology under one roof in the areas of laser tag, motion simulators, and virtual reality. Ten pages are devoted to the impressive IAAPA exhibitors that raised the WOW! factor a few notches.

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STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

The long-awaited results of our annual survey are now at your door, complete with charts, comparisons, and candid comments from those who responded. Every equipment category is covered in great detail, along with general business trends. This report provides valuable statistics and a realistic picture of our industry in today's economic climate.

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COVER

Entrepreneur Pat Klasno thinks big...as big as the giant Disney © licensed plush and other prizes that fill the 40,000-square-foot warehouse of his Carson, Calif., company, King Plush. He is a firm believer in providing soft, cuddly, irresistible, well-made stuffed toys—and plenty of them.

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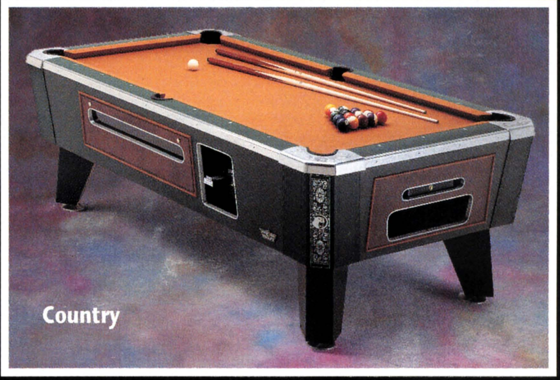
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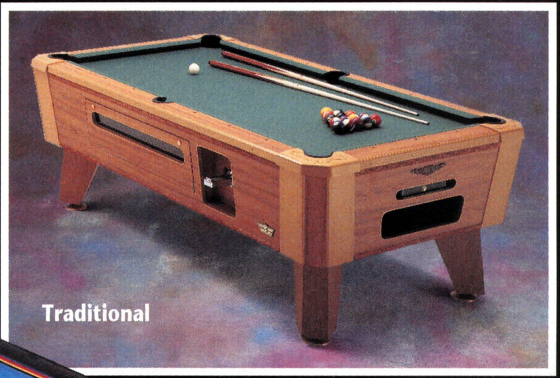
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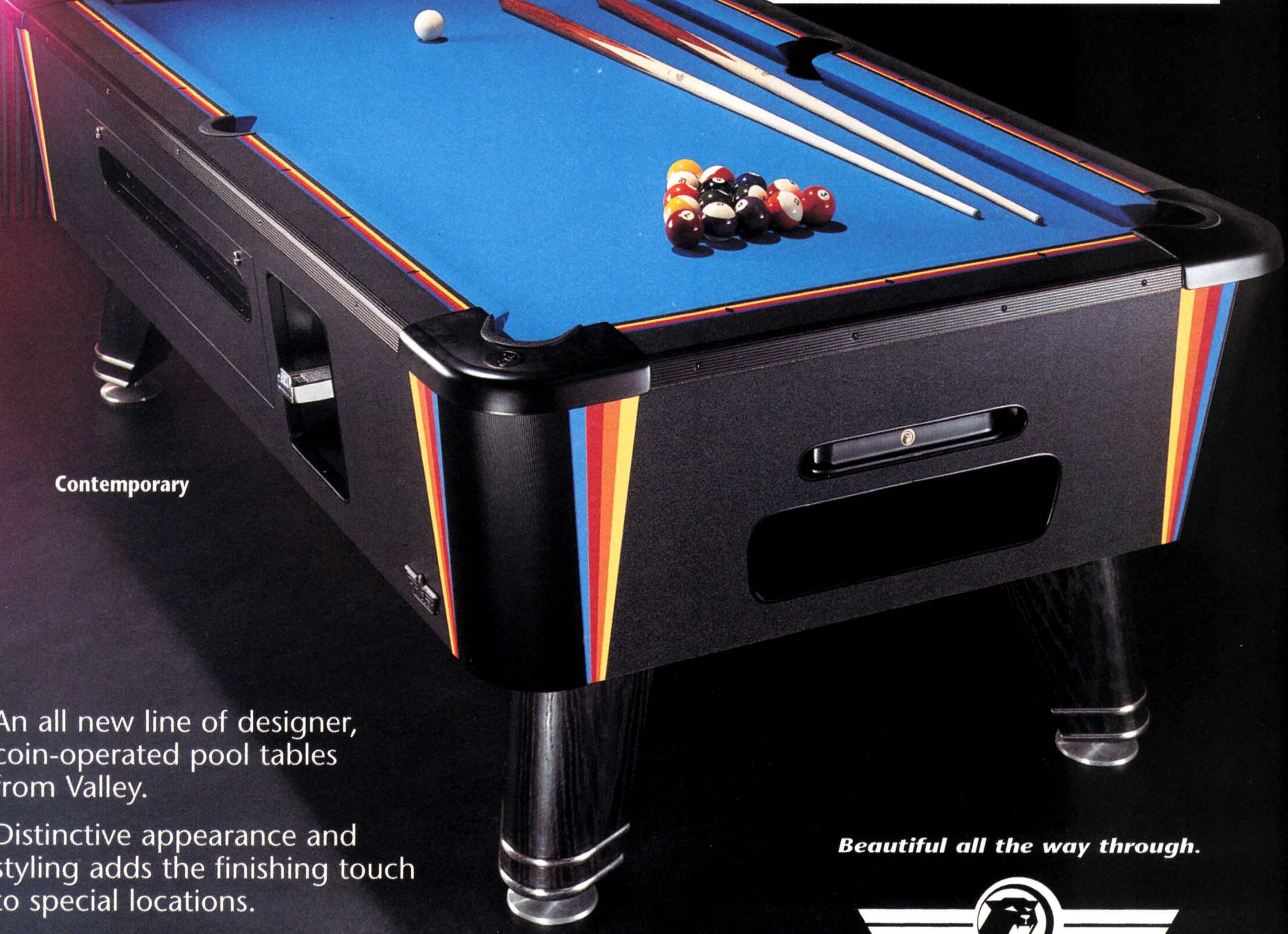
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FROM THE
EDITOR

If looks could kill

VALERIE COGNEVICH

The year ended with many in the industry predicting doom and gloom in the worst way. Collections were down, operators weren't buying equipment in the numbers they had in the past, and there was a glut of used equipment—most notably redemption games—flooding the market.

I am reminded of a statement by James Plamondon of Microsoft, who told us that the coin-op industry underestimates itself. Of course, the talk at the end of the year centered around Microsoft and its scrutiny of the industry. Everyone had an opinion whether it was positive or negative. What Plamondon said was a surprise, yet not uncalled for, certainly. He had spent an exorbitant amount of time learning about the industry, studying every aspect, and professing that it had potential for a mega company like Microsoft. Many questioned the motives, wondering why Microsoft would bother with a small industry like coin-op, thus prompting Plamondon's comment about the industry selling itself short.

Perhaps it takes an outsider to remind us that our industry is a respectable industry, and who could question that an $8 billion industry is worth studying. When we see our numbers we realize that though things were down, as stated by about everyone involved in the industry, the industry is still far better off than it has been at times in the past. One thing that we've heard is that something is bound to happen to turn things around, which is exactly why Microsoft has been such a focus of attention. Is it, in fact, something that will boost the industry?

The coin-op industry has survived and there has, indeed, always been that certain something lurking just around the corner to give it the pick up it needs. Remember the industry before the advent of video games? Take a look now at the impact video games have on the industry, accounting for $3.6 billion dollars in gross revenue. That's nearly what the entire industry once was! Sure, the complaints rage about cost, longevity (or lack of it), home games coming too soon on the heels of coin-op introductions, etc. But video games still make up nearly half of the industry's revenue. We can't count them out by any means.

Each year has had a trend that emerges during our statistical analysis of the industry and I think this year it could be survival of the fittest. There are fewer operators, but the ones that are left have either bought out a competitor or expanded their routes. When you look at the numbers it's hard to believe that some operators can report doing so well, while others seem like they've given up completely. How can someone survive if their video games are making $1 per week. Yes, we get answers like that. Go figure. If your games are making $1 a week you should be doing something else.

We welcome comments from our readers about our survey because after doing this for some 19 years, we learn something every time. The manufacturers help by letting us know if our numbers on their particular type of equipment is on the money or way out in left field. Operators tell us that their equipment does about average (except for that guy only making $1 per week!).

It's an interesting industry and taking a look at the State of the Industry Report puts it in perspective. Either you're doing a lot better than everyone else, or a lot worse. But no matter how you fare compared to the numbers, you've obviously elected to stay in for the long haul. Glad to see you making the commitment. ▲

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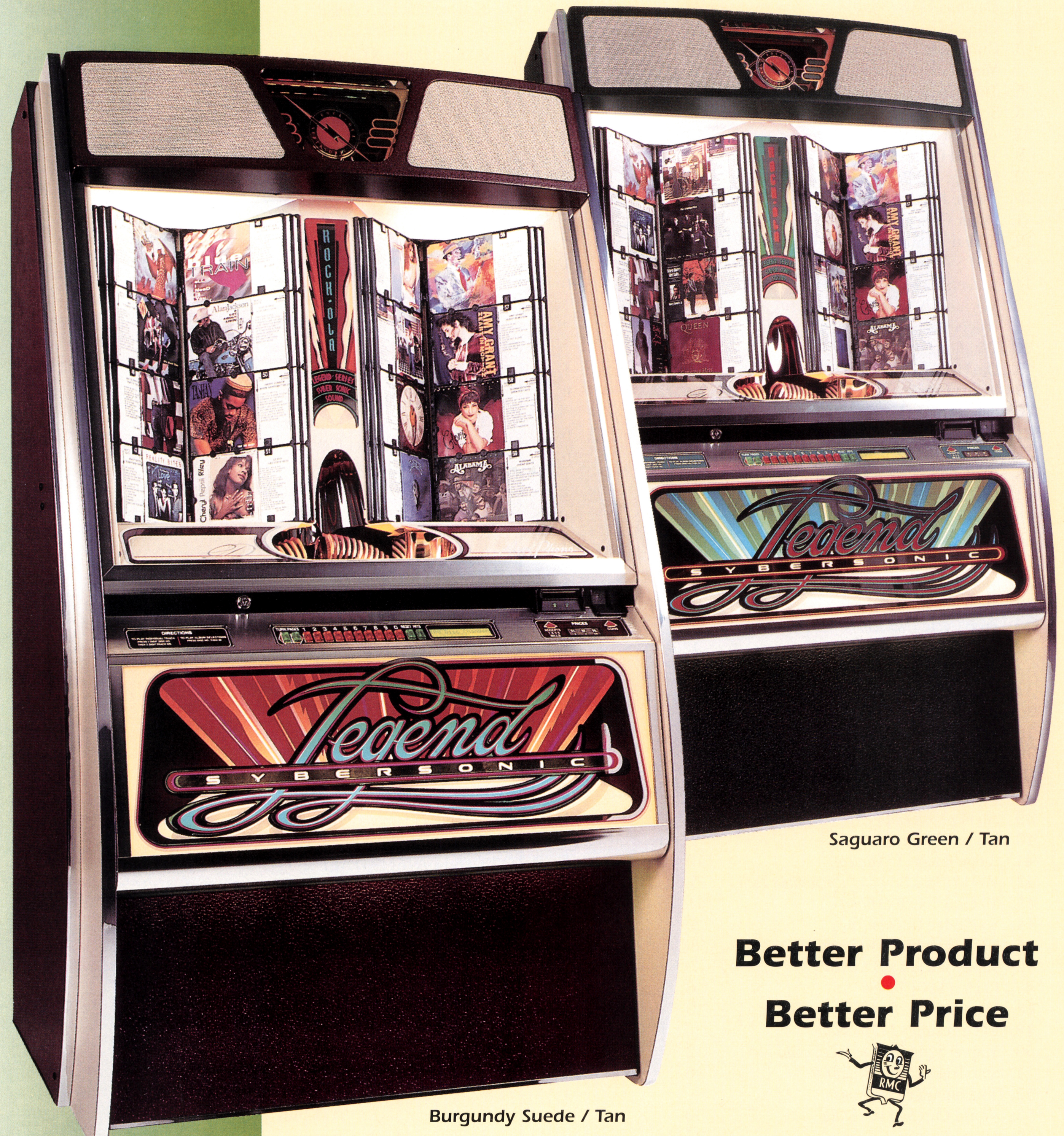
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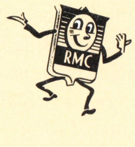

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Equipment Poll

VIDEO & PINBALL COMBINED

	GAME	MO. ON CHART	MO. IN TOP 10
1.	Daytona USA *(Sega)*	28	28
2.	Cruis'n USA *(Midway)*	26	26
3.	Gun Blade NY *(Sega)*	7	3
4.	Megatouch IV *(Merit)*	8	7
5.	Time Crisis *(Namco)*	9	9
6.	Scared Stiff *(Bally)*	2	1
7.	Area 51 *(Atari)*	13	13
8.	Virtual On *(Sega)*	2	2
9.	Golden Tee 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech)*	14	7
10.	Alpine Racer *(Namco)*	13	11
11.	Cyber Cycles *(Namco)*	15	5
12.	X-Men vs. Street Fighter *(Capcom)*	2	*
13.	COPS *(Atari)*	19	1
14.	Tekken 2 *(Namco)*	15	10
15.	Megatouch Tournament *(Merit)*	2	*
16.	Independence Day *(Sega)*	2	*
17.	Winding Heat *(Konami)*	1	*
18.	Die Hard Arcade *(Sega)*	3	1
19.	Virtua Cop 2 *(Sega)*	13	4
20.	Safecracker *(Williams)*	5	*
21.	Attack From Mars *(Bally)*	9	6
22.	The Addams Family *(Bally)*	58	46
23.	Point Blank *(Namco)*	14	1
24.	Indy 500 Twin *(Sega)*	9	*
25.	Bust-A-Move Again *(Taito)*	12	1
26.	Theatre of Magic *(Bally)*	20	9
27.	Open Ice *(Midway)*	9	1
28.	Metal Slug *(SNK)*	7	1
29.	Megatouch *(Merit)*	15	5
30.	Prop Cycle *(Namco)*	3	1
31.	Real Bout Fatal Fury *(SNK)*	1	*
32.	Arabian Nights *(Williams)*	5	1
33.	OutRunners *(Sega)*	39	21
34.	Sega Rally *(Sega)*	15	3
35.	Tournament Solitaire *(Dynamo)*	14	1
36.	Pinball Magic *(Capcom)*	10	*
37.	Solitaire Challenge *(Dynamo)*	30	10
38.	Lucky & Wild *(Namco)*	41	5
39.	Apollo 13 *(Sega)*	10	*
40.	Manx TT *(Sega)*	9	3
41.	Ridge Racer 2 *(Namco)*	19	5
42.	World Class Bowling *(Incredible Tech.)*	5	1
43.	Magical Touch *(Micro)*	11	2
44.	Soul Edge II *(Namco)*	5	*
45.	NBA Hangtime *(Midway)*	8	1
46.	Super Sidekicks 3 *(SNK)*	7	1
47.	Raiden DX *(Fabtek)*	16	8
48.	Who Dunnit *(Bally)*	10	1
49.	Killer Instinct 2 *(Midway)*	9	2
50.	Marvel Super Heroes *(Capcom)*	12	1
51.	Star Trek: TNG *(Williams)*	36	23
52.	Touchmaster *(Williams)*	4	1
53.	World Cup Soccer *(Bally)*	30	18
54.	Virtua Fighter 2 *(Sega)*	23	12
55.	Suzuka 8 Hours 2 *(Namco)*	31	19
56.	Bust-A-Move *(SNK)*	20	9
57.	King of Fighters '96 *(SNK)*	3	*
58.	Twister *(Sega)*	6	*
59.	Street Fighter Alpha *(Capcom)*	5	3
60.	Fighting Vipers *(Sega)*	7	1

VIDEO DEDICATED

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Daytona USA *(Sega)*	9.06	1660
2.	Cruis'n USA *(Midway)*	8.89	1519
3.	Gun Blade NY *(Sega)*	8.71	201
4.	Time Crisis *(Namco)*	8.50	502
5.	Virtual On *(Sega)*	8.20	110
6.	Alpine Racer *(Namco)*	8.05	708
7.	Cyber Cycles *(Namco)*	8.00	654
8.	COPS *(Atari)*	7.83	539
9.	Winding Heat *(Konami)*	7.63	44
10.	Virtua Cop 2 *(Sega)*	7.53	584
11.	Indy 500 Twin *(Sega)*	7.38	379
12.	Prop Cycle *(Namco)*	7.20	123
13.	OutRunners *(Sega)*	7.13	1647
14.	Sega Rally *(Sega)*	7.00	592

VIDEO KITS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Megatouch IV *(Merit)*	8.53	436
2.	Area 51 *(Atari)*	8.34	722
3.	Golden Tee 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech)*	8.06	653
4.	X-Men vs. Street Fighter *(Capcom)*	7.94	90
5.	Tekken 2 *(Namco)*	7.75	793
6.	Megatouch Tournament *(Merit)*	7.70	93
7.	Die Hard Arcade *(Sega)*	7.55	146
8.	Point Blank *(Namco)*	7.40	410
9.	Bust-A-Move Again *(Taito)*	7.33	393
10.	Open Ice *(Midway)*	7.29	173
11.	Metal Slug *(SNK)*	7.26	318
12.	Megatouch *(Merit)*	7.25	685
13.	Real Bout Fatal Fury *(SNK)*	7.20	31
14.	Tournament Solitaire *(Dynamo)*	7.00	365
15.	World Class Bowling *(Incredible Tech.)*	6.71	131
16.	Magical Touch *(Micro)*	6.70	384
17.	Soul Edge II *(Namco)*	6.68	157
18.	NBA Hangtime *(Midway)*	6.67	271
19.	Super Sidekicks 3 *(SNK)*	6.60	56
20.	Raiden DX *(Fabtek)*	6.57	333
21.	Marvel Super Heroes *(Capcom)*	6.50	382
22.	Touchmaster *(Williams)*	6.43	143
23.	Bust-A-Move *(SNK)*	6.33	479
24.	King of Fighters '96 *(SNK)*	6.33	39
25.	Street Fighter Alpha *(Capcom)*	6.32	129

PINBALLS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Scared Stiff *(Bally)*	8.50	94
2.	Independence Day *(Sega)*	7.64	84
3.	Safecracker *(Williams)*	7.50	117
4.	Attack From Mars *(Bally)*	7.48	466
5.	The Addams Family *(Bally)*	7.42	3015
6.	Theatre of Magic *(Bally)*	7.31	947
7.	Arabian Nights *(Williams)*	7.18	217
8.	Pinball Magic *(Capcom)*	7.00	166
9.	Apollo 13 *(Sega)*	6.79	308
10.	Who Dunnit *(Bally)*	6.54	267
11.	Star Trek: TNG *(Williams)*	6.50	1560
12.	World Cup Soccer *(Bally)*	6.42	975
13.	Twister *(Sega)*	6.33	180
14.	Twilight Zone *(Bally)*	6.16	1122

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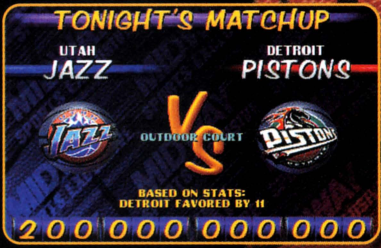
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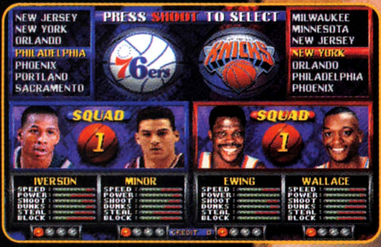
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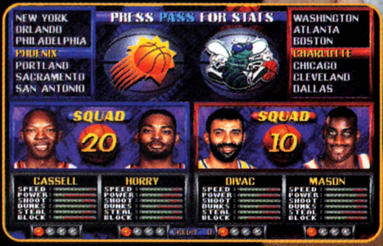
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WASHINGTON
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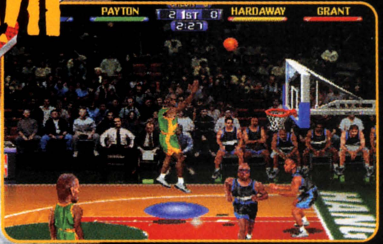
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HARDAWAY
GRANT
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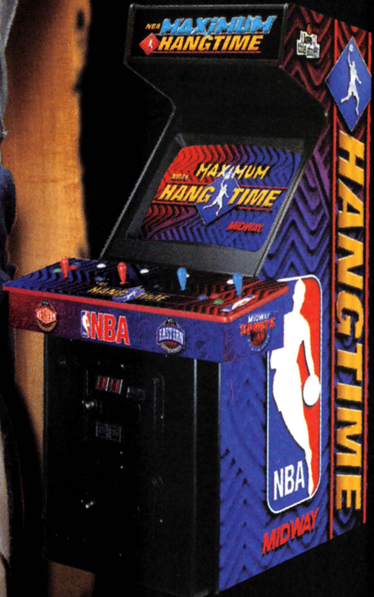
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Equipment Poll

REDEMPTION

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
	ALLEY BOWLERS		
1.	Striker *(Design Plus)*	7.25	381
2.	Bug Bash *(Bay Tek)*	7.00	358
3.	Skee-Ball *(Skee-Ball)*	6.72	359
4.	Skee-Ball Lightning *(Skee-Ball)*	6.64	487
5.	Smartball *(Smart)*	6.25	112
	SPORTS GAMES		
1.	Championship Basketball *(Grayhound)*	7.00	68
2.	Hoop It Up *(Atari)*	6.82	561
3.	Full Court Fever *(ICE)*	6.50	357
4.	Full Court Frenzy *(ICE)*	6.33	191
5.	Shoot to Win! *(Smart)*	6.18	321
6.	Super Shot *(Skee-Ball)*	5.67	251
7.	Arm Champs *(Jaleco)*	5.40	74
8.	UB-QB Football *(Skee-Ball)*	5.38	90
9.	Hoop Shot *(ICE)*	5.25	85
10.	Putting Challenge II *(G.L. Tech.)*	5.00	51
11.	Rage in the Cage *(Fun Merchants)*	5.00	154
	SINGLE COIN PUSHERS		
1.	Jungle Jive *(Coastal)*	8.50	709
2.	Rock 'N Roll/Dino Valley *(ICE)*	6.75	724
	SINGLE CRANES		
1.	Rainbow *(Rainbow)*	8.40	255
2.	Clean Sweep *(Smart)*	7.09	441
3.	Key Catcher *(Am. Sammy)*	7.00	38
4.	Skill Crane *(Grayhound)*	7.00	222
5.	Snack Attacker/Challenger *(AGE)*	7.00	340
6.	Action Claw *(Fun Merchants)*	6.60	316
7.	Hollywood Crane *(Maxwell)*	6.50	47
8.	Big Choice *(Fun Merchants)*	6.31	270
9.	Candy Crane *(Smart)*	5.75	251
	CHILD-SIZE GAMES		
1.	Toss Em *(UETD)*	7.60	107
2.	Li'l Dump the Ump *(ICE)*	7.50	174
3.	Smart Toss Em *(Smart)*	7.20	315
4.	1/2 Pint Frenzy *(ICE)*	7.00	332
5.	Shoot To Win! Jr. *(Smart)*	6.67	413
6.	Jr. All American *(UETD)*	6.50	42
7.	The Flintstones *(ICE)*	6.00	50
8.	Feed Big Bertha *(Smart)*	5.94	219
9.	Barnyard Babies *(Skee-Ball)*	5.67	37
10.	Awesome Toss 'Em *(Acclaim/Lazer-Tron)*	5.50	88
11.	Bozo Basketball *(Design Plus)*	5.20	31
12.	Kiddie Clown Rolldown *(Bay Tek)*	5.00	53
	ROLL DOWNS		
1.	Spin To Win *(Acclaim/Lazer-Tron)*	7.54	451
2.	Roll Down *(Bay Tek)*	6.00	32
3.	Spin-a-21 *(Acclaim/Lazer-Tron)*	5.75	31
4.	Quackers *(Seidel)*	5.60	52
5.	Rock N Roll *(Bay Tek)*	5.50	24
6.	Clown Roll Down *(Bay Tek)*	5.33	149
7.	Pizza Roll *(Bay Tek)*	5.33	22
	NOVELTY		
1.	Cyclone *(ICE)*	9.05	752
2.	Treasure Falls *(Planet Earth)*	8.80	118
3.	Colorama *(Bromley)*	8.33	506
4.	Round 'n Round *(Phoenix)*	8.00	316
5.	Flip N Win *(Planet Earth)*	7.75	260
6.	Dinoscore *(Planet Earth)*	7.54	633
7.	Cyclone Jr. *(ICE)*	6.67	240
8.	Hungry Hungry Hippos *(ICE)*	5.83	25
9.	Pop-A-Ball *(Coastal)*	5.33	51
10.	Shot Clock 2 *(Phoenix)*	5.33	78
11.	Simple Simon *(Am. Sammy)*	5.20	75
12.	Dump the Ump *(ICE)*	5.17	50
13.	Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe *(Data East)*	5.09	22
14.	Buddy Bear *(Smart)*	5.00	149
	COIN DROP GAMES		
1.	Goin' Rollin' *(Seidel)*	8.75	340
2.	Big Haul *(Benchmark)*	8.67	57
3.	Cut the Cheese *(Sega)*	7.71	251
4.	Smokin' Token *(Seidel)*	7.33	602
5.	Wheel 'M In *(Bromley)*	7.15	606
6.	Chicken Dash *(Konami)*	6.88	162
7.	The Mask *(Data East)*	6.88	419
8.	Roll For Gold *(Benchmark)*	6.80	204
9.	Aftershock *(Acclaim)*	6.75	415
10.	Rock-N-Bowl *(Bromley)*	6.47	240
11.	Home Run Hitter *(CCI)*	6.13	430
12.	Super Bank It *(Acclaim)*	5.83	36
13.	Screamin' Slopes *(Midway)*	5.50	223
14.	Coin Circus *(Am. Sammy)*	5.43	94
	GUN GAMES		
1.	Miner's Revenge *(Acclaim/Lazer-Tron)*	6.33	52
2.	Big Mouth *(Meltec)*	5.22	52
3.	Knock-Down *(Meltec)*	5.22	33
	BOPPING/STOMPING GAMES		
1.	Spider Stompin *(Jaleco)*	7.50	463
2.	Tortoise & The Hare *(Island)*	7.25	133
3.	Ribbit Racin *(Acclaim/Lazer-Tron)*	7.22	523
4.	Swamp Stomp *(Acclaim/Lazer-Tron)*	6.33	369
5.	Robo-Bop *(Coastal)*	6.00	32
6.	Wacky Gator *(Data East)*	5.82	144
7.	Cracky Crab *(Namco)*	5.38	62

Results are based on monthly Equipment Poll ballot returns. Point Value = average of ballot ratings on a scale of 1-10; Longevity Points = standings on Best 60 combined game lists (#1 game receives 60 points, #2 game receives 59 points, etc.) *Indicates new or reappearing games.

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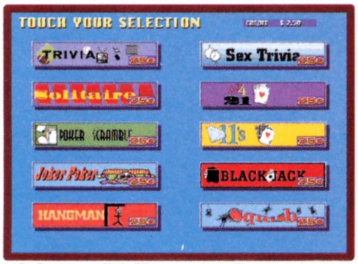
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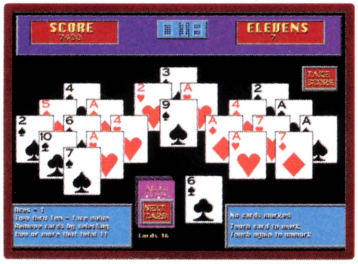
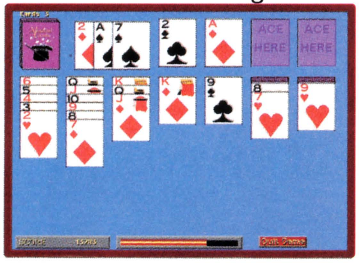
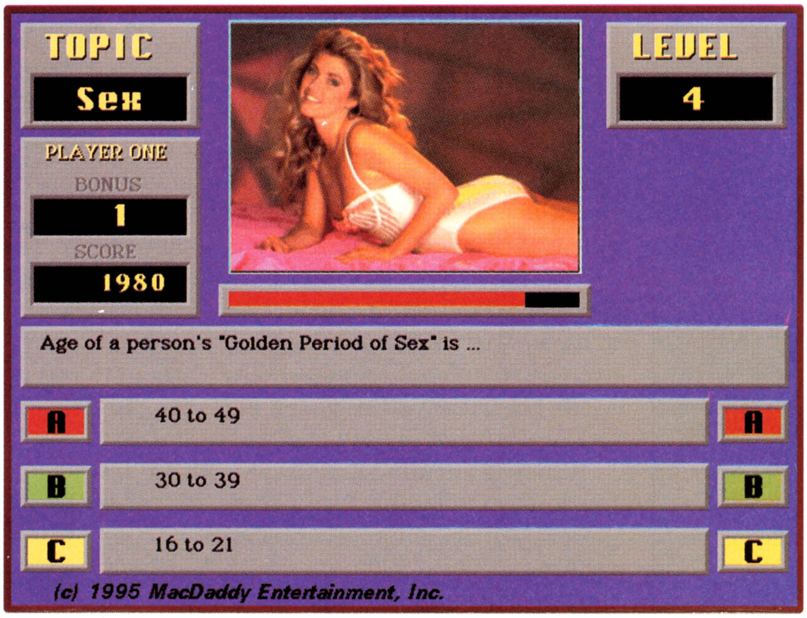

SCORE
ELEVENS
TAKE SCORE

Diamond 11's
The Latest Rage


ACE HERE
ACE HERE
Quit Game

Solitaire - Flip 1 Card Or Flip 3


TOPIC
Sex
LEVEL
4
PLAYER ONE
BONUS
1
SCORE
1980

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C 16 to 21

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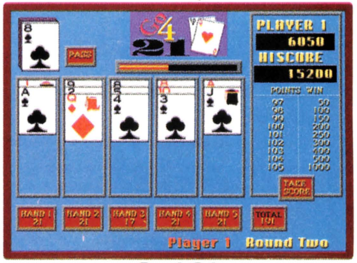
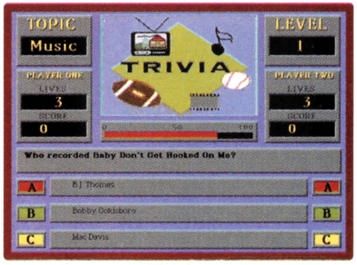

PLAYER 1
6050
HISCORE
15200
PASS
TAKE SCORE
Player 1 Round Two

Go-4-21
Multi-Hand Blackjack At it's Best


TOPIC
Music
LEVEL
1
TRIVIA
PLAYER ONE
LIVES
3
SCORE
0
PLAYER TWO
LIVES
3
SCORE
0

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A B J Thomas

B Bobby Goldsboro

C Mac Davis

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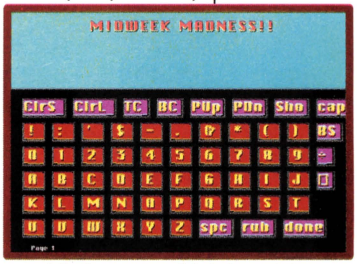
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BS
spc
rub
done
Page 1

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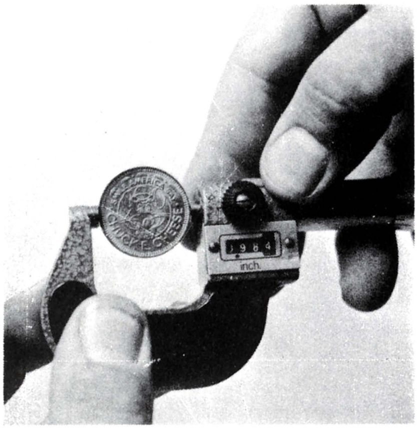

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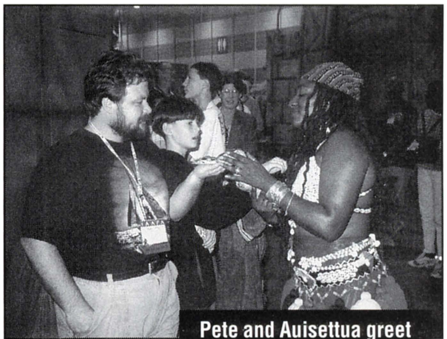
IAAPA: NOT YOUR average trade show

Pete the baby boa constrictor and his handler Auisettua greeted visitors waiting in line for the Iwerks motion simulation adventure, "Secrets of the Lost Temple." Pete casually slid under a shirtsleeve in search of a comfy retreat much to the chagrin of the shirt's occupant. Not far away Huey the acrobatic parrot stopped traffic along with his Pangaea Productions booth pals Eddie the Egyptian fruit bat, Dagger the Harris hawk, and Bartholomew the European legless lizard.

Fog machines were working overtime. The heavy mist rolled down the aisles and crept around corners creating an eerie atmosphere for laser tag arenas and points beyond. This was no ordinary trade show.

If you needed a child's meal cardboard box, a baby bib that said "Spit Happens," frozen capuccino, or a 20-passenger thrill ride you could find it at the 78th annual International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions convention.



Pete and Auisettua greet IAAPA visitors at the Iwerks booth.

Passing an aisle on the last day of the five-day extravaganza I bumped into an operator from the Midwest who said it was her first time at the show. "Why can't we have shows like this for coin-op?" she asked. Certainly this show was well represented by coin-op product ranging from deluxe videos to the newest coin drop games and the latest licensed kiddie rides. What could liven up traditional coin-op shows? Perhaps the strawberry/banana Icees and raspberry-filled churros would make the difference. Or the pretzels, barbecue turkey legs (whole, no kidding), Perky's Pizza, and Dippin' Dots ice cream.

BONNIE THEARD

If there's anything that draws a crowd it's free food, ditto for the T-shirts, hats, and other giveaway items found at traditional coin-op ventures. IAAPA '96 was partly a coin-op show, partly an amusement park ride show, partly a novelty/souvenir show, partly a play equipment show, partly a food and beverage show, and partly a high-tech show loaded with motion simulators, laser tag, and virtual reality. Truly, the sum was greater than its parts.

I don't know if the solution to declining attendance at coin-op trade events would be the addition of food and beverage exhibitors. Perhaps Marian Griffin of the AMOA staff is correct when she says, "We are not downsizing; we're rightsizing." Light attendance of qualified and serious buyers is better than any hall full of people just looking. The problem is a crowded calendar with lots of choices for both the buyers and the lookers. Competition is fierce these days; you have to stand out in the crowd. IAAPA qualified on that count. It delivered a domestic and international crowd; a diverse display of games, prizes, rides, food, costumes, and attractions; plus additional vital services such as insurance and computer systems.

IAAPA '96 was an impressive show, yet even this mega event that started out with crowds on the early days finished with a "slow floor" at the end. There are no guarantees for the big, medium, or small shows. ▲

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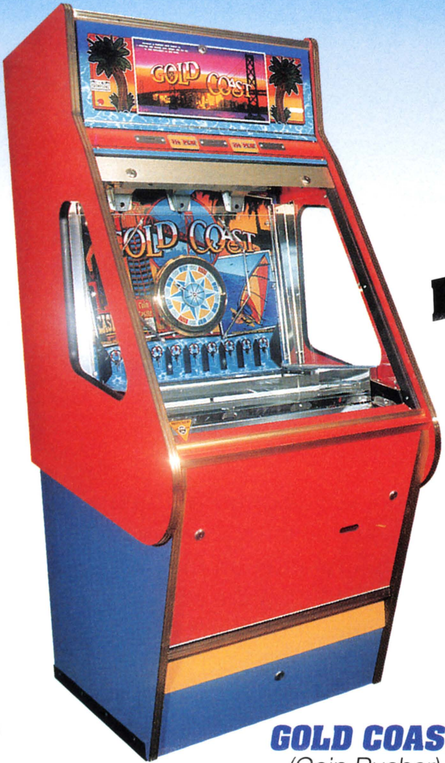

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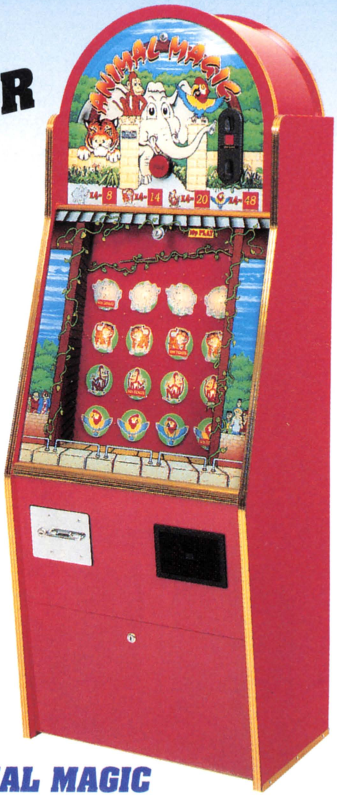
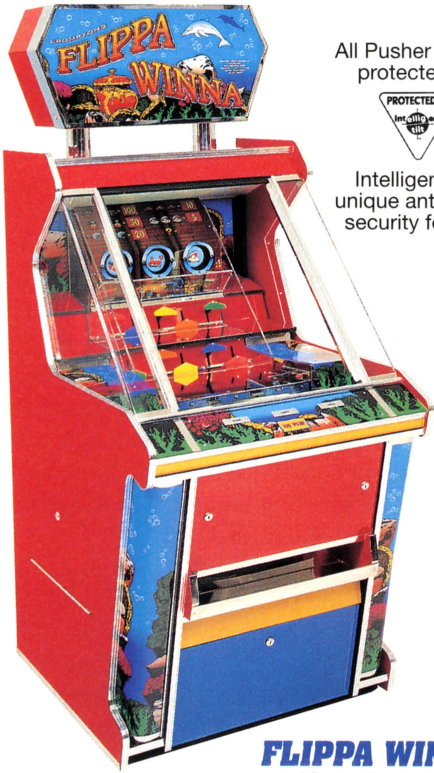

ANIMAL MAGIC

ANIMAL MAGIC
(Token Action)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FLIPPA WINNA
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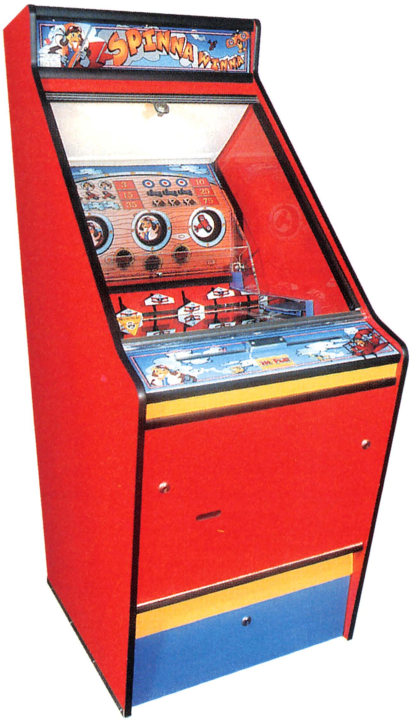
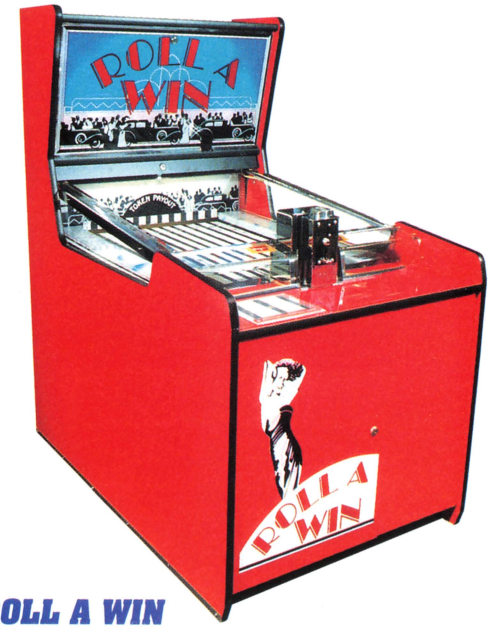

SPINNA WINNA

SPINNA WINNA
(Coin Pusher)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ROLL A WIN

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Survey, senators raise video violence issue

The sleeping tiger of concern over violent video game content awoke last month, several weeks before Christmas, with the release of a report by the National Institute on Media and the Family giving the coin-op industry poor marks for its attempts at self regulation.

Based on a previous National PTA report, the institute's 1996 Video Game Report Card gave consumer game makers an A for establishing and implementing a rating system. Rental and retail outlets got a C for support and enforcement of that system.

However, coin-op manufacturers got a D for rating implementation and arcade operators received the same grade for support and enforcement. In its findings, the institute's report said: "None of the arcade games were rated as to the suitability of content for different ages. Across the board, the survey found that video arcades have no policies regarding children's play. Comments like `It's up to the parents' or `impossible to monitor' were typical.

"On some of the more violent games a `Parental Advisory' message may come on the screen intermittently, along with other information on the game. The message may or may not be on the screen when a player approaches a game. It does not appear once money is in the machine."

Institute founder David Walsh said that violence and mayhem are still major themes in the video game industry, with fighting and shooting games ranking among the most popular. There are also many games on the market that do not feature these elements, he added.

Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), who spearheaded efforts two years ago that resulted in ratings systems being adopted by both consumer game producers and coin-op trade associations, said that while some gains had been made fundamental problems remained.

"I am primarily troubled by the problem that initially drew our attention to this issue, the contents of the games themselves," Lieberman said at a press conference announcing the survey results. "The fact is, despite the concerns first raised by the likes of *Mortal Kombat* and *Doom* years ago, too many games now on the market this holiday season are more violent, more antisocial, and generally more disgusting than ever. The gift these products give is to communicate the unadulterated message that killing is cool and viciousness is a virtue."

The senator also cited specific problems such as uniformed retail employees in the consumer market and "the failure on the part of the arcade (game) manufacturers to fulfill their promise to rate their products" as issues that would likely be taken up in the upcoming session of Congress.

Lieberman concluded that violent video game content and the ads used to promote them are part of a "web of violence that our electronic culture is wrapping around our children, from gun-blazing movies to misogynistic gangsta rap records, which helps desensitize us and our children to the brutality that's spreading our streets and corroding some of our most fundamental common values."

For more on the violence issue see page 20

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Content issue comes as no surprise to some

AAMA executive director Bob Fay said last month's flurry of controversy over violent video content came as no surprise.

Bob Fay

"We told the manufacturers something was going to come before Christmas," said Fay, who fielded numerous press inquiries following a press conference last month held by Sens. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) and Herb Kohl (D-Wis.) and the National Institute on Media and Family criticizing coin-op's attempts at self regulation.

Fay responded to inquiries by noting the fact that AAMA had just begun issuing color-coded parental advisory labels to manufacturers and distributors. According to Fay, the newly initiated program is separate from the interim program AMOA has had in place for over a year. That program was designed to help operators who faced controversy on a local level.

"Ours are designed to be put on all games released that come without an advisory message in the attract mode," explained Fay, who said he expects most manufacturers to include advisories in the permanent artwork or attract mode of games released this year. "The guys know the seriousness of the problem."

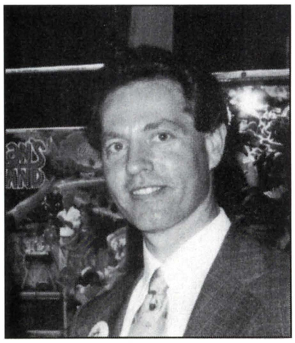
Similar expectations were raised last year, but only a few manufacturers have included permanent advisory notices on their games. One problem encountered was the issue of copyrighting icons that would be included as part of the advisory. The companies that have followed suit with advisories have used text-only messages.

"Everything that would have made sense to people we couldn't use," explained AMOA secretary Frank Seninsky, who formerly chaired the AAMA/AMOA standardization committee and was heavily involved in trying to avoid government regulation of video content. "Using color is another option and AAMA has really taken the issue over. Now, they've made up their own stickers."

The issue is also being looked at as the responsibility of manufacturers and not operators, according to AMOA government relations manager Chris Hogan, who said he spoke with members of Lieberman's staff.

"I think the manufacturers are smart enough to realize they need to come up with a palatable system to satisfy legislators and parents," said AMOA treasurer Jim Stansfield, who chairs the government relations committee. "In the past I think we've gone over the edge."

Frank Seninsky



Capcom closes its doors in Chicago

Capcom Coin-Op announced last month that it would restructure its amusement game division in Arlington Heights, Ill., outside of Chicago. The move will include returning video game operations to the company's Sunnyvale, Calif., office and essentially closing its pinball business.

The move to Sunnyvale, where Capcom has headquartered its consumer game sales division, will take place over the coming months. According to the company, the changes have resulted in the loss of approximately 90 jobs connected with the manufacture and design of pinball games.

Capcom Coin-Op has closed its pinball operation. *Flipper Football* was possibly the company's last pin game.

Capcom said the move will permit the coin-op division to better integrate with the strengthened video development group in California. The sales force will remain in place with Chicago-based Steve Blattspieler and Ron Malinowski expected to move to the California office.

The pinball and electromechanical group, which began producing games in the fall of 1995, is being downsized as a result of current market conditions. Capcom will continue to pursue merger talks with Sega Pinball, located in Melrose Park, Ill.

"It's simply an indication of the state of the pinball business," said Blattspieler. "The sales force will remain the same but you're deleting a product."

New jukebox license fees set for 1997

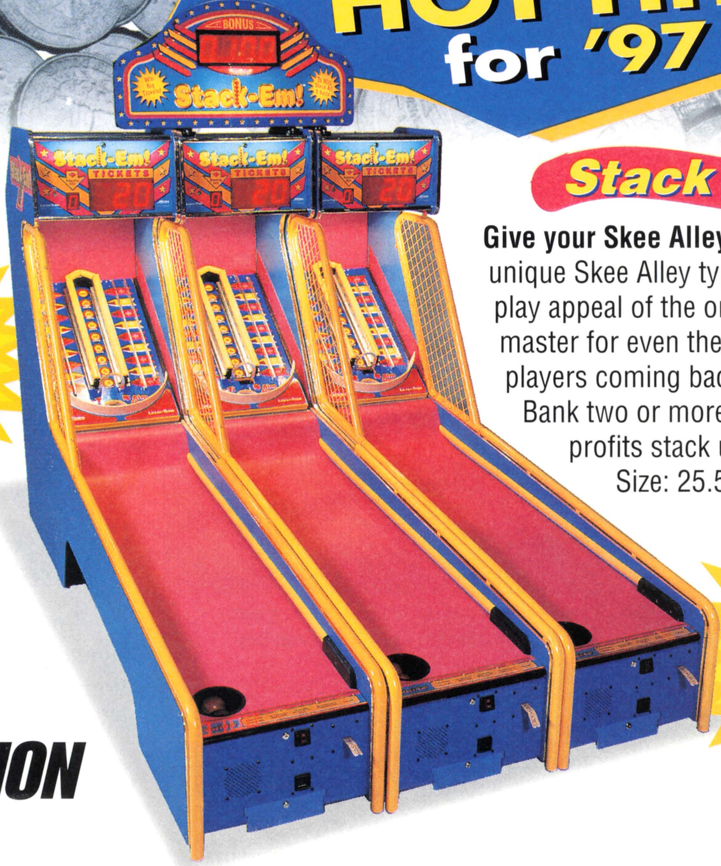
The Jukebox License Office announced the revised fee schedule for 1997, which will require operators to pay fees that are 2.9 percent higher than those last year.

Operators will be required to pay $311 for their first jukebox. The fees for the second through 10th machine came in at $59 each, with that increasing to $49 each for any additional machines.

The increase is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which Congress is expected to take up as an issue during the coming session. A broad base of economists, as well as a bipartisan group of representatives and senators agree that the CPI as it is currently figured overstates inflation.

A proposal to revise inflation numbers would reduce the amount of increase operators see each year in jukebox license fees. The current jukebox license agreement is set to expire in 1999. Operators have until March 15 of this year to file for 1997 license fees on their jukeboxes.

HOT HITS for '97


BONUS
Stack-Em!
Stack-Em! TICKETS
20

Stack 'Em™

Give your Skee Alley players a choice! Stack 'Em is the first unique Skee Alley type game on the market with the same timeless play appeal of the original classic. It's easy to play, yet difficult to master for even the best players! Stack 'Em is designed to keep players coming back again and again trying to better their score. Bank two or more units with your Skee Alleys and watch your profits stack up! Patents pending.

Size: 25.5" W x 121" D x 79", Wt. 400 lbs.

1 Year Warranty

Only 2 Moving Parts!

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Super Solar Spin is Lazer-Tron's #1 rated skill stop video redemption game. Super Solar Spin features Insta-Prize™. This instant-win prize feature allows operators to merchandise any prize they want. The player is instantly rewarded with a prize coupon to redeem at the prize counter. Fully programmable. Easy to use! Patents Pending

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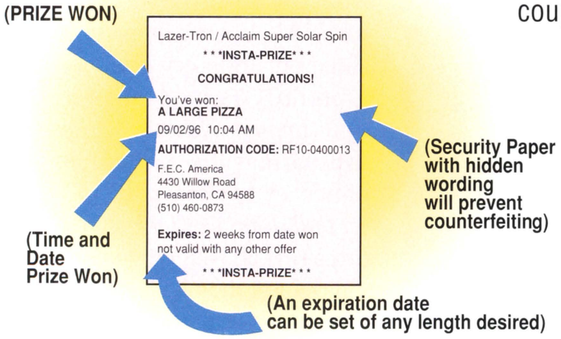

(PRIZE WON)

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* * *INSTA-PRIZE* * *

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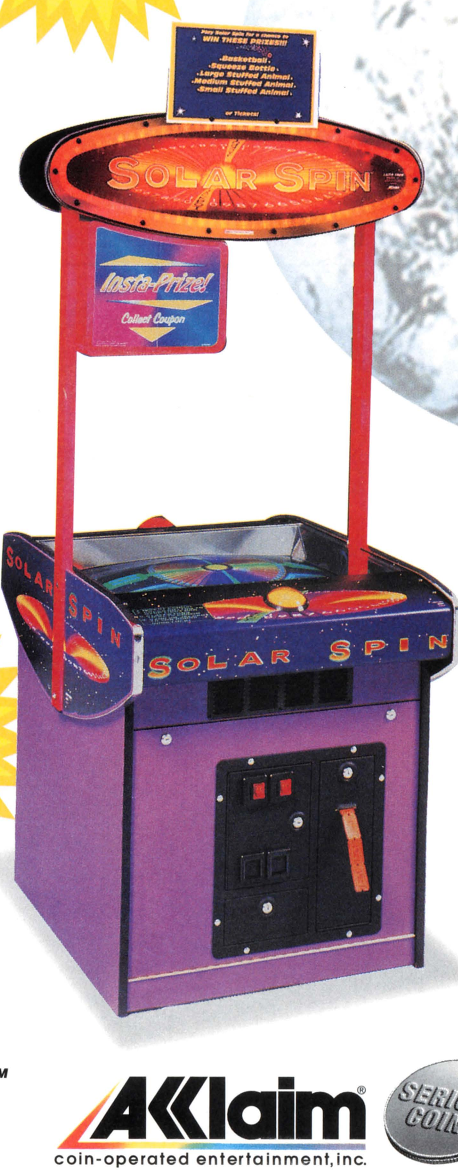
* * *INSTA-PRIZE* * *

(Security Paper with hidden wording will prevent counterfeiting)

(Time and Date Prize Won)

(An expiration date can be set of any length desired)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SOLAR SPIN

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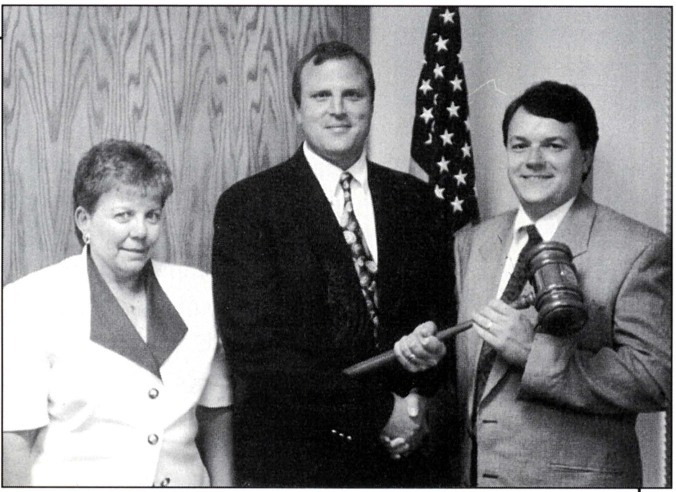
Stebelton assumes top OCMA post



OCMA board chairman Michael Zappa (c) passes the gavel to new president Rodney Stebelton as first vice president Nancy Westerhaus-Baxter (l) looks on approvingly.

Rodney Stebelton of Stebelton Music in Lancaster has assumed the duties of president of the Ohio Coin Machine Association for 1996-97. He was sworn in at a ceremony held in Columbus.

Other officers installed at the ceremony were: first vice president Nancy Westerhaus-Baxter of Pioneer Service in Cincinnati, second vice president Dan Harder of Shaffer Services in Columbus, secretary Evan Brown of B & B Music & Video in Cleveland, and board chairman Michael A. Zappa of Lorain Music in Crestline.

Other members of the OCMA board of directors are: Phillip Elum of Elum Music in Massillon, James Comella of Cadillac Music in Cleveland, James Hayes of Gem Music in Dayton, John Rizek of Big City Vending in Columbus, Kerry Shaffer of Shaffer Amusement in Dayton, Don Wessels of Coin Systems in Columbus, and Ryck Zarick of All Star Vending in Toledo.

Virtual Images, Virtual Systems form alliance for VR products

Two players in the virtual reality industry have formed a strategic alliance to better address the needs of an expanding market, the companies announced recently.

The alliance between Virtual Images Inc. of Columbus, Ohio, and Virtual Systems of Cleveland, Ohio, will allow them to offer a greater range of product choices for operators looking for VR attractions. Full VR systems are available starting at $14.995.

"Clearly the advantage to operators is that they will be able to build their own custom VR systems by choosing the options that work for them," said Tony Ambrozic, president of Virtual Systems.

Options available include several VR helmet models, an array of game scenarios and platform levels, hands-on instruction stations that alleviate in-pod training and increase throughput, and different levels of interior attraction sounds and equipment.

Both companies design and fabricate their own signature VR systems and accessories. Virtual Images manufactures the Cyberpak system, which features high-performance, texture-mapped graphics and incorporates tactile feedback technology. Virtual Systems produces the Avenger system, a full-immersion VR system that is capable of linking multiple pods together for interactive team play.

"This collaborative effort offers customers the best of tomorrow's technology today," said Bryan Eisenhart, president of Virtual Images.

Mondial signs exclusive for *Full Impact Hockey*

Mondial Distributing has signed an exclusive distribution agreement for the United States with Mariah Vision Entertainment of Pittsfield, Mass., for its *Full Impact Hockey* attraction.

Full Impact Hockey was shown last year at the IAAPA show in New Orleans. "All of us at Mondial are excited about the opportunity we have to work with a company as innovative as Mariah Vision Entertainment," said Mondial's Jack Sullivan who will lead the sales effort. "It's been a long time since our industry has seen a product as innovative as *Full Impact Hockey* which truly brings the excitement of hockey to game players."

Full Impact Hockey features real NHL footage coming right at the player, culminating in a real hockey puck entering the playfield at speeds reaching 85 miles per hour. The player's job is to stop those shots. The on-screen players attacking the net are none other than Wayne Gretsky and Mark Messier.

For more information, contact Sullivan, (800)523-3523, or check out the company's Web site (www.mondialgroup.com).

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AAMA receives Commerce Department E Award

In a ceremony held at the Grand Opening of the Highland Park District Export Assistance Center, AAMA was presented with the Department of Commerce's E Award by Assistant Commerce Secretary and Director General of the department's Commercial Service Lauri Fitz-Pegado.

Accepting the award for AAMA were executive director Bob Fay and current AAMA president Rick Kirby of New England Coin-Op.

Established by President Kennedy, the award is designed to give recognition to persons, firms, or organizations which contribute significantly in the effort to increase United States exports.

AAMA president Rick Kirby (l) and executive director Bob Fay accept the President's E Award from Assistant Secretary of Commerce Lauri Fitz-Pegado.

Legislators meet to discuss legalized gaming

The National Council of Legislators from Gaming States will hold its Winter Meeting Jan. 24-26 in St. Petersburg, Fla., offering legislators a chance to exchange information about gaming issues that affect their states and their constituents.

Issues on the table for discussion include the newly created federal gaming commission, the benefits of gaming in Atlantic City, N.J., the explosion of lotteries around the country as well as the question of video lottery, what works in off-track betting, legal issues affecting tribal gaming, and what lawmakers need to know about voter referenda.

For more information, contact NCLGS, (518)449-4699; fax (518)432-5651.

VNEA sets championship dates for coming year

The Valley National Eight Ball Association is preparing to dazzle the amateur pool players across the country with the announcement of both the 17th Annual VNEA Intl. Championships is Las Vegas and the 7th Annual VNEA Intl. Junior Championships for the 1997 season.

As many as 5,000 of the best pool players will gather at the Las Vegas Riviera Hotel & Casino for the first event May 23-31, while the junior championship is expected to draw hundreds of young competitors to Sioux City, Iowa, July 11-13.

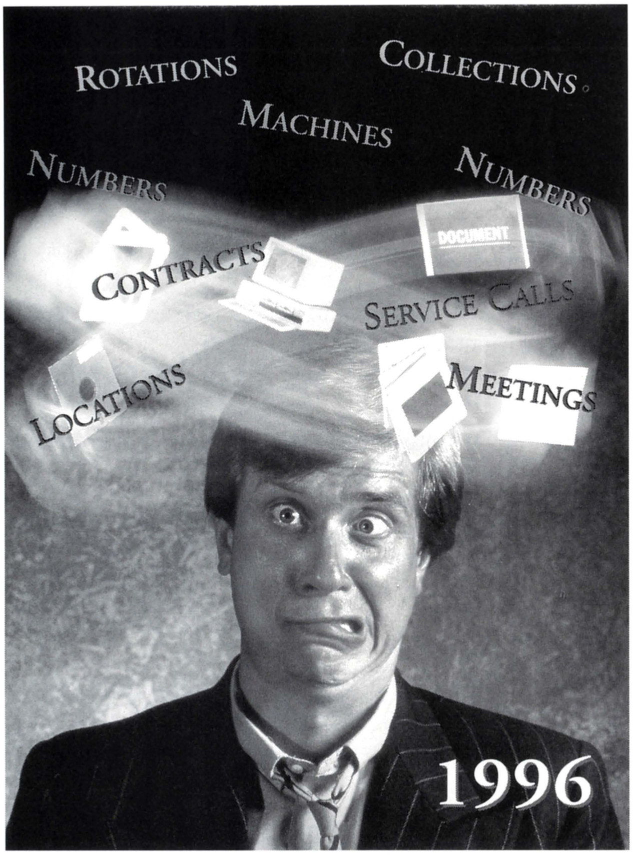
With cash prizes totaling an estimated $400,000, the Las Vegas event will showcase an international contingent of players vying in 16 different divisions. They will also be treated to a number of entertaining social events including a Suds & Chips Mixer, live performances, and an extravagant awards banquet finale.

Anticipation is also growing for two of VNEA's newest attractions: the World Speed Pool Tour and the popular Artistic Pool Challenge. The Speed Pool event is the result of close cooperation between World Speed Pool Champion and record holder Dave Pearson and the VNEA. Over 200 VNEA charter members around the United States and Canada are expected to conduct local competitions for their players, as well as a grand finals that will send a champion to Las Vegas.

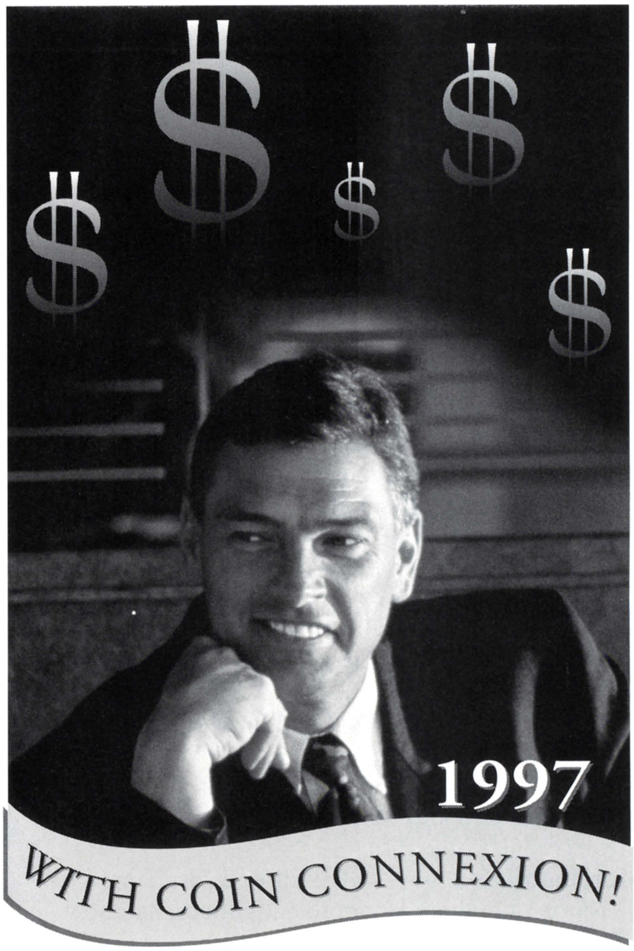
Dr. Cue, Tom Rossman, will again be conducting the Artistic Pool Challenge, marking the third year for this sharpshooters event where accuracy is of the essence. The World Speed Pool Tour and the popular Artistic Pool Challenge have also been included in the junior championship agenda for the second year in a row building on last year's success.

Junior players will compete in three team divisions—Youth (ages 9-13), Minors (ages 14-17), and Majors (ages 18-20), as well as the 8-Ball Singles competition and the Adult/Junior Scotch Doubles contest.

DON'T WAIT ANOTHER YEAR!


ROTATIONS
COLLECTIONS
MACHINES
NUMBERS
NUMBERS
DOCUMENT
CONTRACTS
SERVICE CALLS
LOCATIONS
MEETINGS
1996

Tired of trying to keep track of all the details?
Frustrated with your route-management system?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IAAPA announces award winners and officers

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions announced its awards for best new products and best exhibits at its annual trade show and convention held last November in New Orleans.

BEST NEW PRODUCTS

Major Attraction: 1st—Chaos by Chance Rides; Honorable Mention—Crashendo Motion Simulation by Imax Corp.

Waterpark Attraction: 1st—Tidal Wave Rider by New Braunfels

FEC Attraction: *Tokyo Wars* by Namco-America; Honorable Mention—*Big Bird Express* by Copy Right Rides

Coin-Op Kiddie Ride: 1st—*Bert & Ernie's Sing Along Car* by Copy Right Rides

Technology Applied to Amusement: 1st—Synchronous Linear Motors by Intamin; Honorable Mention—Quest for Castle Starlight by Laser Media

Food Services: 1st—Frozen French Fries by Boardwalk Fries; Honorable Mention—Pizzas of Eight Jr. by Pizzas of Eight

Games: 1st—*Lucky 7's* by Skee-Ball Inc.; Honorable Mention—*Center Vertical Water Game* by Bob's Space Racers

Virtual Reality: 1st—*Pac-Man VR* by Virtuality; Honorable Mention—*Big Head Racer* by the Vivid Group

Coin-Op Arcade Equipment: 1st—*Tokyo Wars* by Namco-America; Honorable Mention—*Stack-Em!* by Acclaim/Lazer-Tron

Merchandise: 1st—T2-3D Battle Across Time by Visionz Unlimited; Honorable Mention—Rainbow Pellet by Snazaroo

Revenue and Admission Control: 1st—Series 1200 Revenue and Price Control System by Data Service Co. of America

Show Production and Entertainment: 1st—Science Experiment by The Mad Science Group; Honorable Mention—Secrets of the Lost Temple by Iwerks Entertainment

Displays and Sets: 1st—Design of Legoland Windsor by Rouse Wyatt & Associates; Honorable Mention—Inflatable Dancing Big Boys by Air Dimension Design Inc.

Services: Daytona USA Attractions by Rouse Wyatt Associates; Honorable Mention: Internet Ticketing by Gateway Ticketing Systems

BEST EXHIBITS

Major Attraction: 1st—SCS Co.; Honorable Mention—SimEx Inc.

Kiddie Ride/Attraction: 1st—Pentes Play Inc.; Honorable Mention: Zamperla

Waterpark Attraction: SCS Co.; Honorable Mention—ProSlide Technology

FEC Attraction: 1st—Q-Zar; Honorable Mention—Sally Corp.

Coin-Op Kiddie Ride: 1st—Copy Right Rides

Technology Applied to Amusement: 1st—Iwerks Entertainment; Honorable Mention—McFadden Systems

Food Services: 1st—Pizzas of Eight; Honorable Mention—Boardwalk of Fries

Games: 1st—Bob's Space Racers; Honorable Mention—Laser Storm

Virtual Reality: 1st—Virtuality; Honorable Mention—Vivid Group

Coin-Op Arcade Equipment: 1st—Bob's Space Racers; Honorable Mention—Skee-Ball Inc.

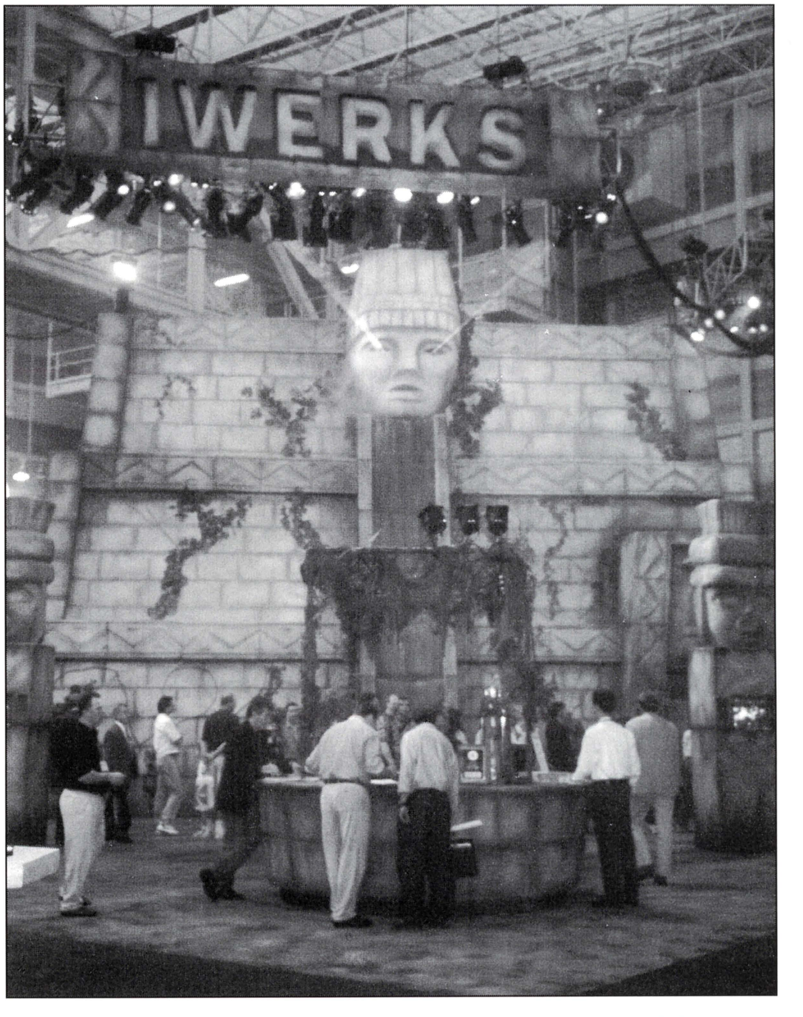
Merchandise: 1st—Ace/Acme; Honorable Mention—Visionz Unlimited

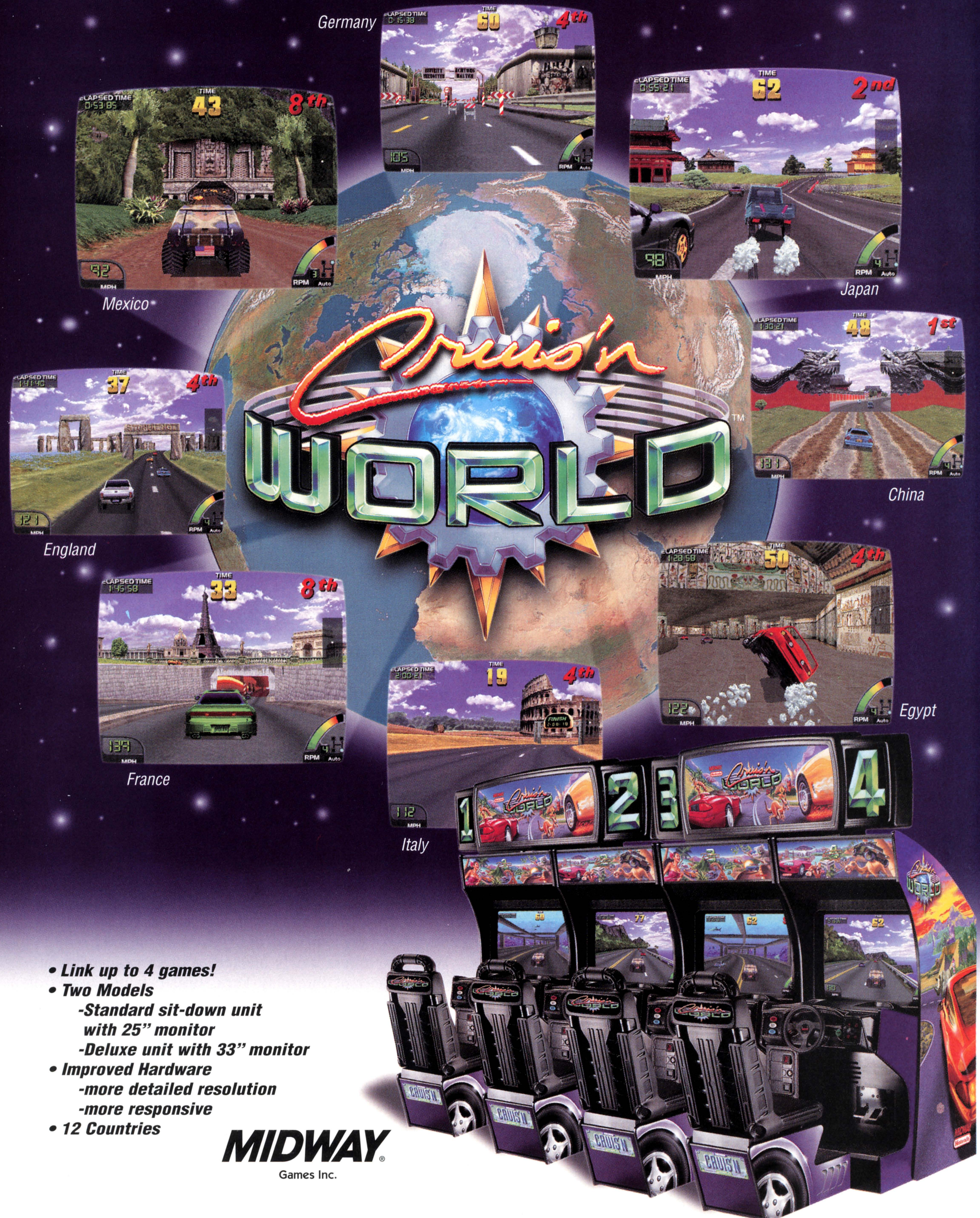
Revenue and Admission Control: 1st—Gateway Ticketing Systems Inc.; Honorable Mention-VGS Systems Engineer

Show Production and Entertainment: 1st—Iwerks Entertainment;

See **IAAPA** page 28

Below: Iwerks Entertainment won two IAAPA awards for production and entertainment, one for technology applied to amusement, and the image award.




Germany
Japan
Mexico
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1
2
3
4

- **Link up to 4 games!**
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  - **-Standard sit-down unit with 25" monitor**
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Nintendo

IGT sues WMS over Nevada slot machine

International Game Technology has instituted a new lawsuit against WMS Industries subsidiary WMS Gaming. The suit alleges that WMS' spinning reel slot machine sold in Nevada infringes a patent owned by IGT.

IGT is seeking an injunction and damages. However, WMS Gaming believes, based on the opinion of its patent counsel, its machine does not infringe on IGT's patent. WMS' machine was granted its own patent Oct. 29, 1996.

According to WMS, its current Nevada slot machine is different from its Model 400 slot machine which a federal court previously found to have infringed IGT's patent. That decision is on appeal to a federal appeals court, which has entered an interim stay of that order.

Gaming updates

In its most recent issue of the *Legalized Gaming Guidepost,* AMOA reported on a number of developments in different states across the country. The following is a summary of some of those reports.

☛ Approval from the state's high court has cleared the way for an Oklahoma group, Better Opportunities for Oklahoma Students and Taxpayers (BOOST), to push forward a casino ballot initiative that would allow limited casino gaming.

☛ In a tight vote, voters approved as many as three gambling casinos in Detroit without the approval of the governor. Voters in the city have already given the thumbs-up to two facilities in an unofficial vote.

☛ New Hampshire voters elected Jeanne Shaheen as their new governor. During the campaign, Shaheen proposed allowing video gaming at the state's pari-mutuel tracks.

☛ A survey of Pennsylvania religious leaders and church members showing strong opposition to riverboat gaming was held late last year to help discourage passage of a bill that would have legalized up to 25 riverboat casinos if given the seal of approval by voters in local option elections.

☛ Voters in Jefferson County W. Va., approved up to 1,000 video lottery terminals at the Charles Town Races pari-mutuel track. The state's new governor is not in favor of gambling, but will not oppose casinos approved by local option.

Namco founder Mr. Masaya Nakamura and president Kevin Hayes by their award-winning game *Tokyo Wars.*

IAAPA

continued from page 26

Displays and Sets: 1st–Kx Intl. Inc.; Honorable Mention–Creative Environs Inc.

Services: 1st–Forrec Ltd.; Honorable Mention–BRC Imagination Arts

Equipment and Supplies: 1st–Edward's Technology; Honorable Mention–Waymatic Inc.

Image Award: 1st–Iwerks Entertainment

In addition to these awards, IAAPA elected officers and board members, as well as naming four industry greats to its hall of fame.

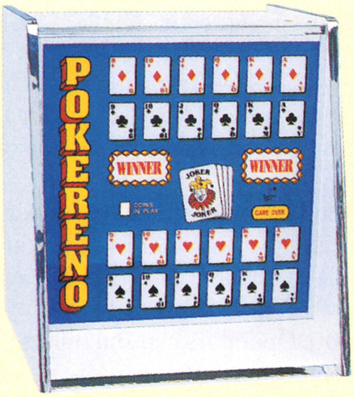
Elected to serve as officers in 1997 were president Gena Romano of Nellie Bly Amusement Park, New York; first vice president Larry Cochran of Six Flags Theme Parks, Texas; second vice president John Roberts of Busch Entertainment, Missouri; third vice president Rene Aziz of Grupo Magico, Mexico; treasurer Geoffrey Thompson of Blackpool Pleasure Beach, England; and secretay John Graff of IAAPA staff, Virginia.

Board members newly elected to three-year terms are Alain Baldacci of Interplay Park, Brazil; Jane Cooper of Paramount Parks, North Carolina; Olivier de Bosredon of Parc Asterix, France; Court Huish of Huish Family Fun Centers, California; George Millay of Wet 'N Wild, Texas; Rob Norris of Seabreeze Park, New York; Mike Pledl of Huss Maschinenfabrik GmbH & Co., Germany. Serving a one-year term on the board is Tom Haggard of Santa's Workship, Colorado.

IAAPA's living inductee to the hall of fame was Bo Kinntorph, former president of Liseberg Gothenberg, Sweden. Honored posthumously were amusement ride inventor John Norman Bartlett, Spanish amusement center developer Dr. Salvador Andreu Y Grau, and roller coaster designer Frederick Church.

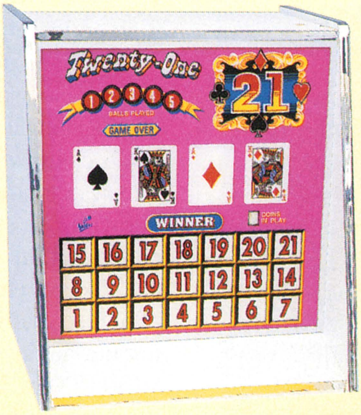
Seidel Wrote the Book on Rolldowns

* * * Now Here's the Sequel

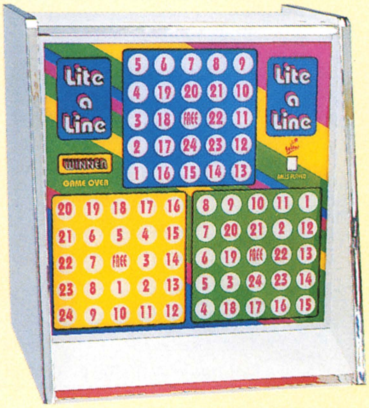

POKERENO
WINNER
WINNER
JOKER

POKERENO LXI

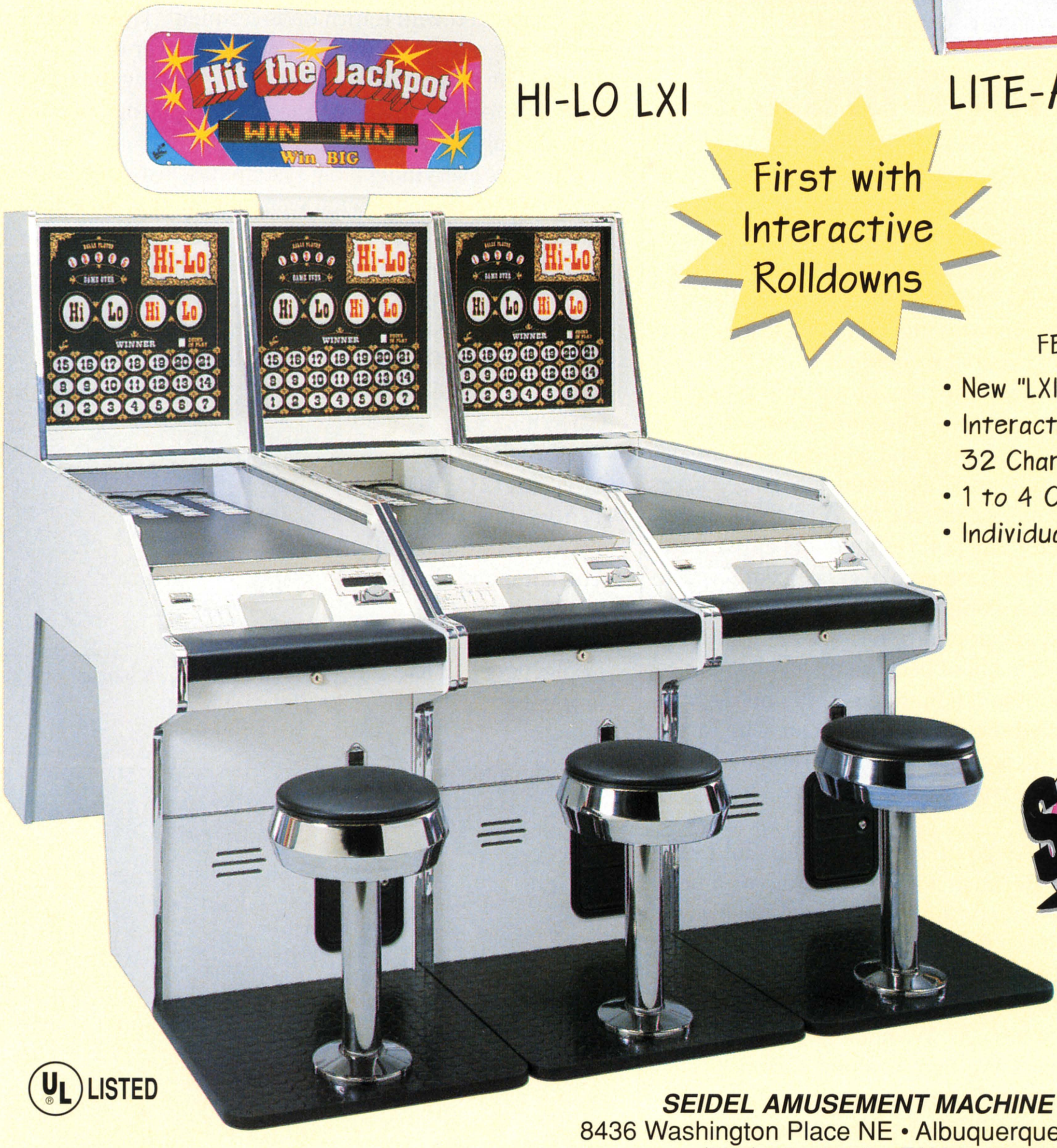
Familiar Games of
PROVEN Value
and Entertainment


Twenty-One
21
BALLS PLAYED
GAME OVER
WINNER

TWENTY-ONE LXI


Lite a Line
Lite a Line
WINNER
GAME OVER

LITE-A-LINE LXI


Hit the Jackpot
WIN WIN
Win BIG
Hi-Lo
Hi Lo Hi Lo
WINNER

HI-LO LXI

First with
Interactive
Rolldowns

FEATURES:

- New "LXI" Cabinet Styling
- Interactive
  32 Character Display
- 1 to 4 Coins per Game
- Individual Jackpots

Seidel
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Midway's *Cruis'n World* on display at Fun Expo '96.

Cruis'n for a bruis'n

The slings and arrows have been flying, resulting in some good phone conversations, because Midway's *Cruis'n World* appeared as the number one dedicated video on our December Equipment Poll. What's the problem with that? Well, it seems the game was not shipped until after our magazine was mailed. A check with the company's Joe Dillon revealed that the game was indeed out on test but not in high enough numbers to put it on top.

It has been years since the only other time a similar situation occurred. The story is the same now: we truly believed the game was shipping and added it as a choice on the ballot. Games are listed alphabetically and *Cruis'n World* appears right under *Cruis'n USA*. A re-check of the ballots indicated that many poll respondents apparently checked off *Cruis'n World* instead of its *USA* counterpart. Phone calls to operators confirmed this fact, with several saying they simply made an honest mistake and are careful when they fill out the ballot because they know its significance. When the other snafu happened, one respondent told us he marked the game a 10 because he loved it at a trade show. And, of course, *Cruis'n World* has been featured at three major trade shows–AMOA, Fun Expo, and IAAPA.

Why didn't a red flag go up when the game hit number one right away? Because it is not unusual for a new game, especially one with positive trade show reviews, to do exceptionally well the first few weeks on location.

We thank everyone who called to express their concern about the mistake, and wish they would call more often to discuss other subjects. We apologize for any confusion this has caused. We take the poll seriously and know our readers do too. For those who receive the poll, please take the time to fill it out with your true assessment of the games you have on location.

Heads Up introduces new approach to laser system

In a move the company hopes will bring more operators into the laser tag industry, Carrollton, Texas,-based Heads Up Technology has introduced a scaled down version of its high-end laser tag system.

Company president Rob Harshaw says that by repartition and revising some of the circuits in its traditional product, Heads Up will now be able to sell laser tag systems that utilize the gun without the vest. This will bring the cost of a 10-gun system under $40,000. Operators can still utilize the gun and vest system in conjunction with the more affordable configuration.

"The system is a lot more versatile this way," he said. "It allows so many more people to play the game. Operators are not having to make this huge decision about spending $150,000 to $200,000. At the same time it lets them get the best software."

By changing its business model, Harshaw said Heads Up has made laser tag a more desirable commodity for operators concerned with return on investment. The system can also be upgraded to a much larger scale over time, he added. The 10-gun system comes complete with targets, score printout, and real-time scoring, requiring operators to provide only the arena.

"You get everything a big system has, just scaled down," Harshaw concluded. "What we really want to do is lead the market and shape it, not let it shape us."

For more information, contact Heads Up Technologies, 2033 Chennault, Suite 100, Carrollton, TX 75006; (214) 407-1131; fax (214) 407-1758; e-mail (rharshaw@heads-up.com). The company also has a Web site (www.heads-up.com) displaying all of its products.

Heads Up Technology is introducing a gun-only laser tag system.

Setting the record straight

Gib and Alice Clevenger of Richmond, Ind., wrote to us regarding a letter in our November Mailbox (p.16): "We read the letter from B. Roberts (concerning Board/Works) and felt we had to clarify to all of our operator friends who were aware that our son, Doug, was one of the original partners in Board/Works. The Clevenger name has not been associated with this company for over three years. Thank you for the opportunity to set the record straight. What started out as a good business evidently has turned into a disaster."

CAPCOM COIN-OP, INC. ("CAPCOM") WOULD LIKE ALL OPERATORS TO BE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING:

Last year a provision of the U.S. copyright law (17 U.S.C. §109 (e)) that permitted the public performance of parallel and gray market video games expired*. As a result, the public performance (e.g., display in an arcade or other place for commercial gain) by an Operator of any video game that contains a gray market or parallel board without the copyright owner's authorization violates the rights of the copyright owner.

Operating and publicly performing "X-Men vs. Street Fighter" or other Capcom games which contain parallel or gray market boards, will be considered a violation of Capcom's rights under federal copyright law, and Capcom and Marvel Characters, Inc. will be forced to pursue all available legal remedies against such Operators. In addition to possible legal action, please bear in mind that parallel or gray market boards carry no warranty and have no convertability. The current "X-Men vs. Street Fighter" parallel boards contain a bug in the software program.

*The expiration of this provision occurred in part through the agreement of the American Amusement Machine Association ("AAMA") and the Amusement and Music Operators Association ("AMOA").

If you have any questions, please contact Steve Blattspieler at:

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Paradigm Simulation forms new division

Paradigm Simulation, the Dallas, Texas,-based provider of real-time simulation and virtual reality development software for Silicon Graphics workstations, has created a new division, Paradigm Entertainment.

The new division, which developed *PilotWings 64* for Nintendo of America, will focus its energies on creating leading-edge 3-D game content and tools for the entertainment industry.

Paradigm's goal is to provide game publishers and developers with a one-stop shop comprised of content development services, state-of-the-art creation tools, comprehensive training programs, and a single point of contact for developer support. The company's simulation division will continue to provide real-time development environments for traditional engineering simulation and training applications. Dave Gatchel will serve as executive vice president of the new division.

"The operating models for Paradigm's entertainment and simulation tool businesses are so different that separate business operating units must be established," said Paradigm Simulation CEO Ron Toupal. "Creating this separation will allow both Paradigm Entertainment and Paradigm Simulation to focus on their respective markets."

Have You HEARD?

PlayNet Technologies, formerly Aristo, was in the process of testing its countertop networked Internet-linked game *Touchnet* in the San Jose, Calif., and Chicago, Ill., areas late last year. Tests were also scheduled for its two other products, *Playnet* and *Teamnet.* A company spokesman said the company will announce a general shipping date following these tests sometime in the first quarter of this year.

Atlantic Intl. Entertainment has introduced its Internet Casino Extension product to casinos worldwide. The extension offers the opportunity to wager in games and international sporting events using personal computers via the Internet and the World Wide Web.

3Dfx Interactive, along with several of its OEM, VAR, and system integrator partners, has introduced the Obsidian XS-100. Based on an advanced configuration of 3Dfx Interactive's Voodoo Graphics chipset, the Obsidian XS-100 represents the high-end of 3Dfx Interactive's Obsidian family of professional real-time 3-D graphics accelerators for PCs. The San Jose, Calif.,-based company also announced several new game titles which will run on the company's graphics accelerator Voodoo Graphics. The titles include *MechWarrior 2* from Activision Inc. and *CyberGladiators* and *Silent Thunder: A-10 Tank Killer II*, both from Sierra. In other company news, former Capcom Entertainment president L. Gregory Ballard has been named president and CEO. Ballard and former Sony Computer Entertainment executive vice president Jim Whims have also been named to sit on the company's board of directors.

The Minnesota Operators of Music & Amusements held their 10th annual State Singles & Doubles Dart Championships last month at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Minneapolis. The event saw more than 850 total entries with approximately 600 participants competing on 120 electronic dart games for $30,000 in prize money and awards.

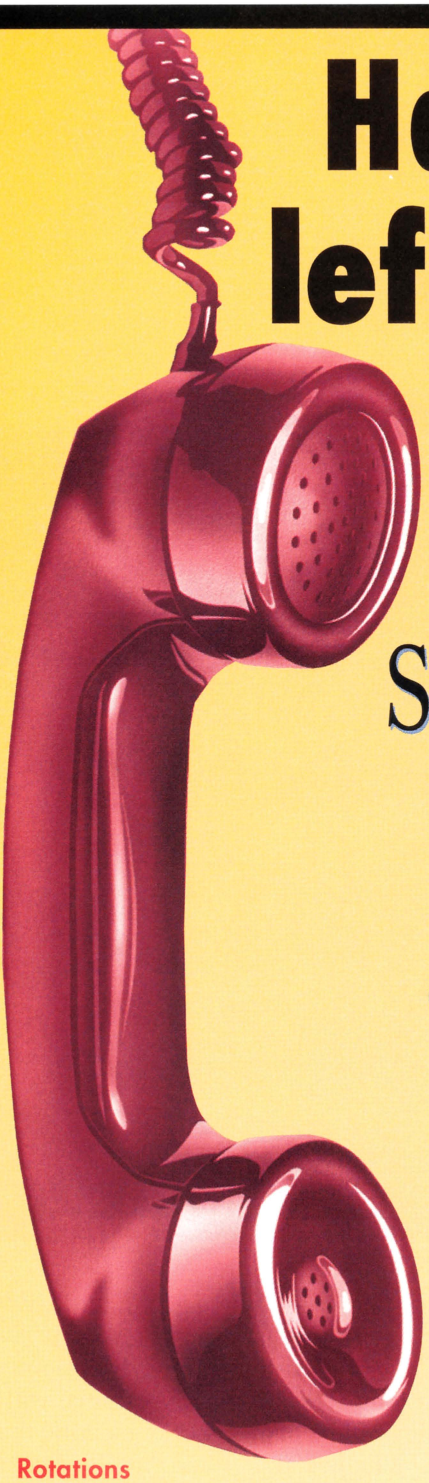
The Amusement Industry Manufacturers and Suppliers International Safety Seminar has been scheduled for Jan. 12-16 at the I-X Center in Cleveland, Ohio. The program is designed to give participants general learning opportunities as well as those that are specific to their roles in the amusement industry. Curriculum tracks are offered in four major disciplines: water parks, loss prevention/inspectors, maintenance, and operations.

Bankshot Basketball recently introduced a line of smaller courts to fit any park or recreation facility. The new line includes permanent courts with six, nine, and 13 stations. Bankshot's complete selection of courts range from three to 24 stations with space requirements from 4,000 to under 400 square feet.

Capcom Entertainment will debut its popular coin-op title *Super Puzzle Fighter* on both the Sega Saturn and Sony PlayStation this month. The company also announced that it will release *Resident Evil 2*, a sequel to its consumer hit *Resident Evil*, exclusively for the Sony PlayStation.

Utopia Technologies, which develops games for the PC and coin-op industries, has launched its new East Coast operations. The office will be located in New York City under the direction of Robert Jaeger, Utopia co-founder. Utopia developed the PC hit title *Montezuma's Revenge*, as well as coin-op releases such as *Countertop Champion 1* and *2*. For more information, contact Utopia, (972)517-3377; e-mail (press@utopiatech.com). ▲

Has tech support left you hanging?



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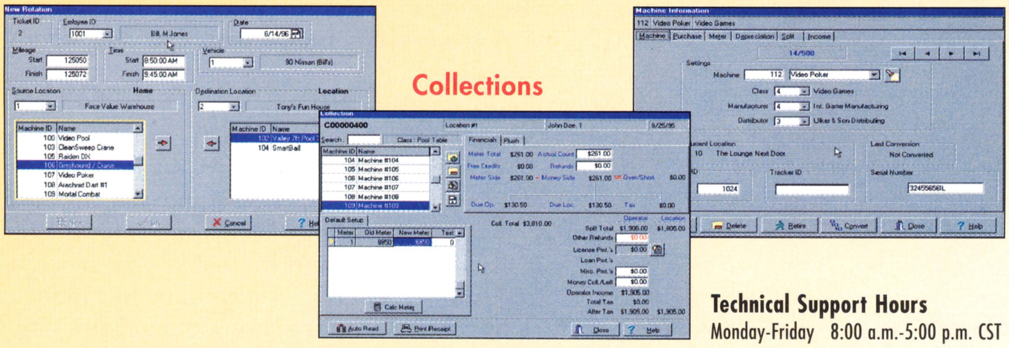

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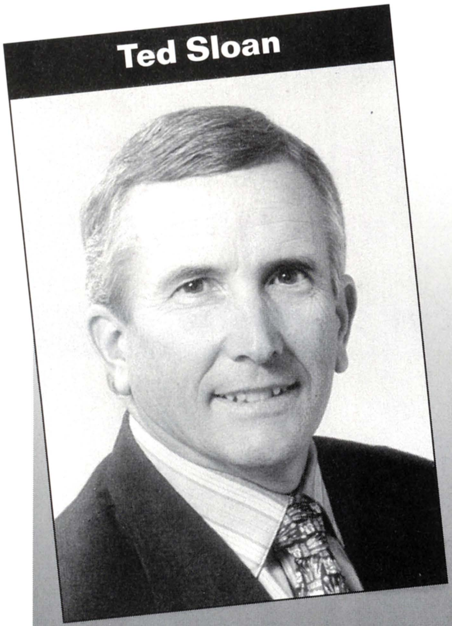
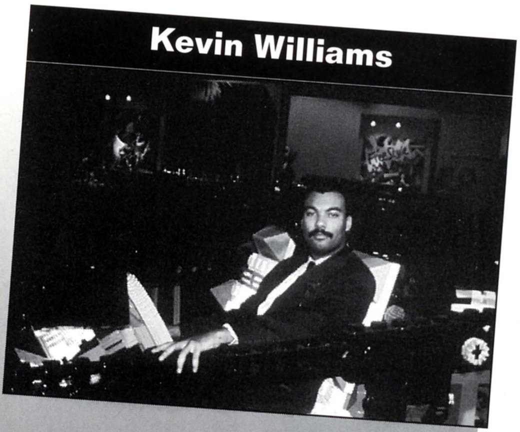

Ted Sloan

Alec Sprouse


Kevin Williams

TED SLOAN has been promoted to vice president of sales for Bob's Space Racers. He joined the company staff in 1991 and has served as sales manager. The continued growth of Bob's Space Racers necessitates a restructuring in the sales division with Sloan now having overall administrative responsibility for coordinating the sales staff. He also will give special attention to large projects and take responsibility for sales in the expanding Asian market.

ALEC SPROUSE has joined Press-Com Electronics as quality assurance and production manager. Press-Com has been working on VR system projects with Immersive Technologies. Sprouse was formerly director of product development at Skee-Ball Inc. where he was a staff member for 22 years.

Play-By-Play Toys & Novelties has appointed **RAYMOND BRAUN** as chief financial officer, effective Jan. 2. Braun replaces **JUANITA LOZANO**, who will assume the role of financial reporting manager. Braun comes to Play-By-Play after 16 years with Coopers & Lybrand L.L.P., where he was most recently a partner in the business assurance group. Play-By-Play chairman and CEO Arturo Torres praised Braun for his strong financial background and expertise in corporate financial planning, mergers, and acquisitions, adding, "his experience with high growth companies will be a key asset in meeting the opportunities and challenges that face Play-By-Play." Braun has served as an auditor and strategic consultant for Play-By-Play on several transactions, including the Ace Novelty acquisition.

After three years with Division Ltd. of Bristol, England, **KEVIN WILLIAMS** has moved to the post of software manager at Walt Disney Imagineering in Glendale, Calif. While at Division, Williams helped steer the company's VPX graphic architecture into the emerging location-based entertainment (LBE) market. He informs that Disney is working on a new LBE project that is a Disney-branded, interactive entertainment center with attractions, video games, merchandise, and food and beverage. No word at press time on the final concept details and plans for opening. ▲

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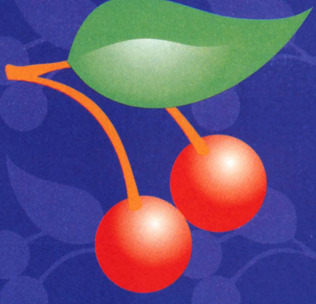

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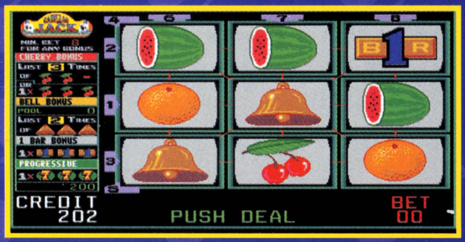
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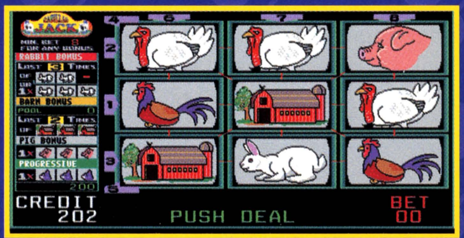
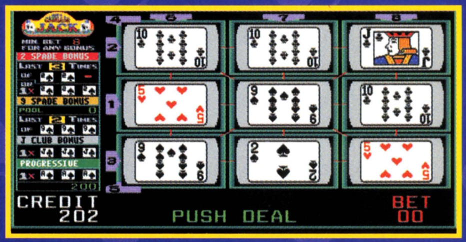

RABBIT BONUS
BARN BONUS
PIG BONUS
PROGRESSIVE
CREDIT 202
PUSH DEAL
BET 00

Animals Plus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* Certain Restrictions Apply

Microsoft travels to ATEI; parks section sold out

James Plamondon of Microsoft.

Microsoft's James Plamondon will take his message to the upcoming Amusement Trades Expo Intl. Jan. 21-23 in London, England.

His one-hour presentation, "Innovation Through Standardization," promotes a concept that Microsoft claims offers the industry a prosperous future with benefits for all sectors, from software developers and hardware manufacturers to distributors, operators, retailers, and the end-user.

The presentation proposes three new standards that could be adopted by the video game segment of the amusement industry, involving a universal computer hardware platform, standard control panels, and a standard interface between the control panels and video game cabinets.

Plamondon, who is director of coin-op technology marketing with the computer giant, feels the video game return on investment has been in decline for years despite the introduction of some excellent games and increasing polygons. He asks, "What can reverse this downward trend and increase the industry's profits at every level? We have some ideas on that. But it is up to the coin-op industry to implement these ideas."

"Innovation Through Standardization" is scheduled for the Brompton Suite on Level 2 of Earls Court 1 Exhibition Hall Wednesday, Jan. 22, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Capacity is limited to 500 persons; tickets are on a first-come first-serve basis by faxing ATEI, +44-171-713-0446. Anyone unable to attend the presentation can find details on Microsoft's Web site (www.microsoft.com) to search under "coin-op."

In other ATEI news, the Parks, Rides, and FECs section of the forthcoming event is sold out, according to show organizers. The themed area will feature 69 of the leading names in the industry from nine countries—Belgium, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States.

ATEI's Peter Rusbridge said, "Any member of the industry who may be doubting the value of a business trip to ATEI should take a brief look at our list of confirmed exhibitors. We have many of the leading names in this important sector all housed under one roof. Add to this the attraction of 186 exhibitors in the main body of ATEI and this is a show that should not be missed!"

Four of the most influential associations will be represented: the International Association of Family Entertainment Centers, the European Showmen's Union, the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions, and the German ride manufacturers association-VDV.

The addition of the parks, rides and FEC section has had a positive impact on attendance at the exhibition. 1996 figures indicate that 14.5 percent of buyers at the show had a primary interest in companies and products in this section. Further analysis illustrated the international appeal of the new section, with 42 percent of registrations coming from outside England.

Also, Bell-Fruit Mfg. will join with Bass Leisure Entertainment and PlayNET Technologies to create a themed 'Net-Work" Internet Cafe at the show to demonstrate innovative ways of bringing the Internet into the coin-op market. Visitors can have real-time on-line access to a worldwide network of games, news, and services direct from the show floor.

For more information on ATEI '97, including confirmed exhibitors, visit the Web site (www.ab-europe.co.uk/abe/atei) or use the FastFax service, +44-990-13-40-30.

Thomson has solid agreement with TVR

Thomson Entertainment has finalized an agreement with Taiwan Virtual Reality Technologies Inc. for the distribution rights to its two-seat entertainment simulators in Taiwan. In a parallel move TVR has ordered 15 Thomson Venturer S2 simulation capsules.

TVR is part of the Megatime Technology Group and was set up as a dedicated organization to handle the Group's entertainment business in Taiwan. Megatime has been at the forefront of introducing high-tech attractions to Taiwan's arcade market. It currently owns and operates two Venturer S2 units, one of which is used as a demonstrator model in the office of company chairman and CEO Mr. Aichi Chen.

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Taiwan industry update

The Taiwan government is slowly working to turn the amusement industry around for the better, informs Lauren Swartz, editor of Game Time Intl. magazine. Here is the latest report on activities in Taiwan:

The Ministry of Economic Affairs has completed the draft of Amusement Center Regulations, which classify amusement centers into three groups: FECs, adult recreation centers, and Pachinko centers. The latter two groups are not permitted to be in residential areas, and the hours of operation for all centers are restricted to 9 a.m.- Midnight, although local customs and business practices will be taken into consideration.

The Commerce Department of the MEA planned to finalize the official regulations and send a report to the MEA vice minister for approval in December. The last step before implementing the regulations is the approval of the Executive Yuan. The end result would be legalizing electronic game machines and the Pachinko industry following last April's video arcade scandal in Taipei.

Regulations consist of 29 sections in four articles. The mandatory sanction procedures regarding the violation of the rules are not specified; by law then, regulations are viewed as administrative guidelines. Basic provisions are:

1) FECs are to provide educational/intellectual machines.

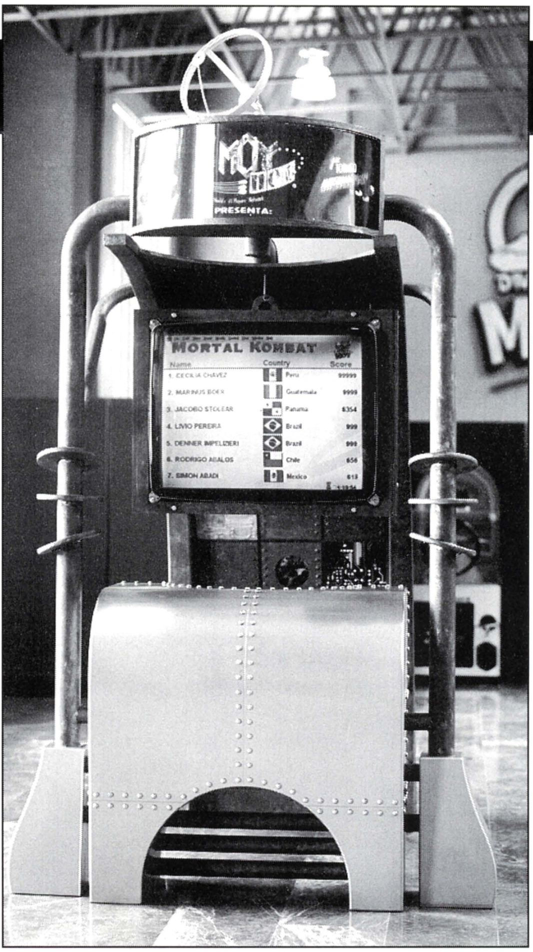
2) Adult recreation machines are defined as those which incite customers' gambling propensities, sexual desires, and/or tendencies toward violence.

3) Due to the unique quality of Pachinko machines themselves, and the way the game is played, Pachinko stands as its own category.

The three groups of machines may not be run in the same amusement center. Operators must obtain permits to run adult games and Pachinko centers, but FECs need only submit an application. Local authorities will establish inspection boards to scrutinize the operation of adult recreation and Pachinko centers. Operators can ask these boards for a public hearing to ensure their rights if they are questioned.

To avoid illegal activity of any kind, including mafia involvement, the eligibility of amusement facility operators is strictly regulated. Those who have not been out of prison for at least three years for crimes related to gambling, drug trafficking, or sexual misconduct, and those with a record of previous gang involvement or habitual violence, will not qualify to be amusement facility operators.

The value of redemption prizes is limited (not to exceed NT$2,000) and prizes may not be exchanged for cash, bonds, coupons, or other currencies. Repurchasing prizes from customers is also prohibited.



The communications and information interchange system, MOY NET.

MOY NET goes worldwide

MOY NET, a linking communications and information interchange system, is being launched to provide better and more entertainment options for players at all MOY FECs around the world.

MOY is the largest FEC chain in Latin America. It follows a philosophy of providing state-of-the-art equipment combined with promotions to deliver an entertainment experience that surpasses players' expectations.

Franchisees from Central and South America first learned about MOY NET at IAAPA '96. MOY NET was established as a result of joining the Internet with Moymoney. Moymoney is a hardware and software system that permits electronic games to be operated with debit cards. This way players can receive unique benefits at MOY centers and assures franchisees a better administrative and automated control of their facilities.

With MOY's Web page, Moy Net's scope is greater than the FEC installations, since every player can follow different worldwide events and promotions from the comfort of a computer connected to the Internet.

The possibility of any player's competition for the title of the best video, simulator and/or pinball game record, entered with their names and latest score seen and compared at other FECs around the world on the Internet is just the beginning of a stage of entertainment at the disposal of MOY clients.

To learn more, contact Jorge Suarez P., 52 (3) 663-7777; fax 52 (3) 663-8062; e-mail (josuare@moy.com.mx); Web site (http://moy.com.mx).

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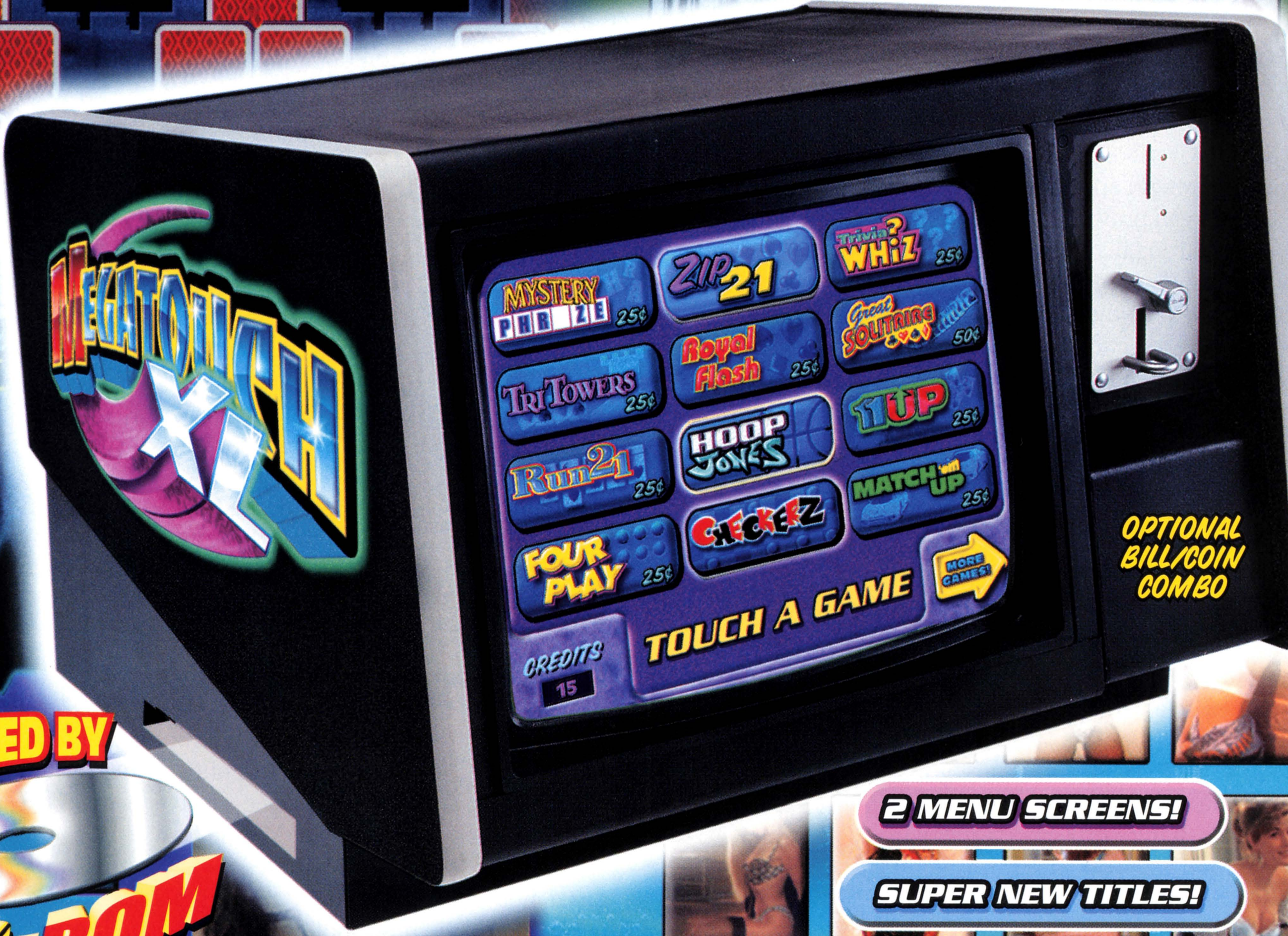
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New association formed in India

The Indian Association of Amusement Parks and Industries has been organized to meet the growing amusement market in India.

The objectives of the association are numerous: to promote Indian amusement industries abroad, promote exports and foreign manufacturing collaboration, improve knowledge and standards of professionalism, ensure that equipment fully complies with Indian legal safety standards, and represent the interests of members in discussions and negotiations with local and national government departments on all matters relating to the industry.

Geoffrey Thompson and John Graff of the Intl. Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions both joined in congratulating the new association, which announced its launch and published its first newsletter for distribution at the IAAPA '96 convention and trade show in New Orleans in late November.

Stated Graff: "Forming your association is proof of the growing strength and influence of the amusement industry in India. You can provide the industry with vital leadership and direction during this period of development. It is important to have a unified voice in dealing with governments, and to have an organization where professionals can gather together and share their accumulated knowledge and experience."

The IAAPI can be reached at (079)656829/30/31/32; fax (079)6561275.

Chicago Lock appoints Kane's

Chicago Lock Co. has appointed Kane's Vending Service as the exclusive authorized distributor of its vending product line in Canada.

Kane's is a full-line distributor of vending equipment and components with offices in St. Catherines and Toronto. Company president Ron Kane said, "With our history of 40 years serving the vending market in Canada, and with Chicago Lock's product line, we expect to fully meet the needs of the expanding vending market in Canada."

Chicago Lock spokesman Ron Swenson added, "Our new arrangement with Kane's indicates our increased commitment to establishing a line of steady communication and service to our valued Canadian customers.

Kane's offers locking cylinders, T-handles and cam locks, bulk vending locks, Ace key handles, and weather covers to protect locks against outdoor elements. Kane's can be reached at (905)227-6125. Chicago Lock can be reached at (540)562-0966.

Compact Disc

Down Puerto Rico way

Rowe Intl. executive vice president Joel Friedman (r) recently visited with distributors and operators at open houses in Puerto Rico. Here he joins Rudolfo Garcia of Antex Intl. Dist. Co. by the *LaserStar Venus*, the model that Friedman says has received an enthusiastic reception along with the *Caliente*.

Booth sales brisk for India Amusement Expo

The American Amusement Machine Association-sponsored India Amusement Expo has attracted numerous exhibitors to the new trade show at the Taj Palace Hotel in New Delhi, India, Feb. 26-27.

Among those already securing space are: Acclaim/Lazer-Tron, Atari Games, Betson, Bondeal Sales Intl. Ltd., Cromptons' Leisure Machines Ltd., Design Plus, Dynamo, G.L. Technology, Galaxy Dist., ICE, James Industries, K and U Co. Ltd., LAI Group, Leisure Allied, Merit Industries, Midway Games, NSM- America, Rock-Ola Mfg., Skee-Ball Inc., Valley Recreation, and Williams Electronics Games.

Only 61 booths are available for the show; they will be awarded on a first-come first-serve basis. For more information, contact W.T. Glasgow Inc., (708)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.

Vivid names Q-Zar Middle East

The Vivid Group, the Toronto, Canada-based company known for its Mandala virtual reality games systems, has named Q-Zar Middle East as its exclusive location based entertainment distributor in the Middle East.

Q-Zar Middle East distributes Q-Zar laser tag franchises throughout the Middle East. It also has installed Mandala systems at Fun City in Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia; Burjuman Center in Dubai, United Arab Emirates; and The Virtual Galaxy in Beirut, Lebanon.

Q-Zar will be marketing the Mandala systems in two ways: as a stand-alone, arcade-style unit, and as a custom, multiuser installation for massive throughput in amusement/theme parks. Mandala software titles include Turbo Kourier, Sharkbait, Soccer, and Hockey.

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China Amusement Expo sets dates

The China Amusement Expo '97 will be held at Beijing Exhibition Centre Sept. 25-29. The show, which is organized by Business & Industrial Trade Fairs Ltd. and the China Intl. Advertising Corp., is the first unified professional exhibition in China's amusement industry.

China's population is more than 1.2 billion, making it a vast potential market for modern amusement equipment. According to show organizers, the living standard in China has been rising, and the total disposable capital is expected to increase at a rate of 30 percent annually.

While older Chinese citizens spend their leisure time on such activities as reading and playing chess, younger Chinese are looking to mechanical and electronic games along with new favorites, golf and billiards. Weekend family entertainment leans more toward leisure centers and shopping arcades.

For more on CAE '97, contact Elaine Wong, (852)2865-2633; fax (852)2866-1770.

IMA selects Italy its partner land

In a move to augment its international role, IMA '97 has chosen Italy as its partner land during the four days of its trade fair, Jan. 22-25 in Frankfurt, Germany.

IMA is the first coin-op machine trade show to include such an international partner. After the successful introduction of the Billiards and Sports Games innovations last year it was time for another step forward. According to IMA project manager Petra Lassahn, "It is only right that our fair program should accommodate these (international) guests more and more and become as international as possible."

The choice of Italy is due to the upswing in the Italian coin-op machine business. The Italian sector will be represented by a special booth at IMA '97. Work is underway organizing other activities to highlight the partnership, which is one way for IMA to express gratitude to countries that support the trade fair.

United Arab Emirates hosts fourth show

·M·I·L·E·

Developers and operator/owners of theme parks, water parks, adventure play facilities, and family fun centers will gather at the Dubai World Trade Centre in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, April 8-10 for the Theme Parks & Fun Centres Show.

The show, which was first mentioned in the "International Calendar" in November 1996, is being organized under the auspices of the Middle East International Leisure Expo (MILE) along with other related shows. The event was renamed to cover the entire Middle East, Africa, and the Sub-Continent; it is governed by an advisory committee of professionals from the Middle East leisure industry.

The FEC concept is considered ripe for further development in the Middle East, according to the show organizers. The Middle East has seen an increase in the number of family fun centers which are now a part of most shopping malls, cinemas, restaurants, pubs, and public entertainment facilities. Coin-op machines and other entertainment venues are in demand in the Middle East.

Advance information on this event states that municipal authorities are seeking ways to improve the many existing public parks by installing play areas, swimming pools, water parks, miniature golf, and similar attractions.

Exhibits at the show will include participatory play equipment for both indoor and outdoor use; rides including bumper cars, go-karts, kiddie rides, roller coaters, and carousels; non-gaming coin-op games, vending machines and food preparation equipment; admission systems; and consultants and designers.

For more details, call +971-4-449644; fax +971-4-446238.

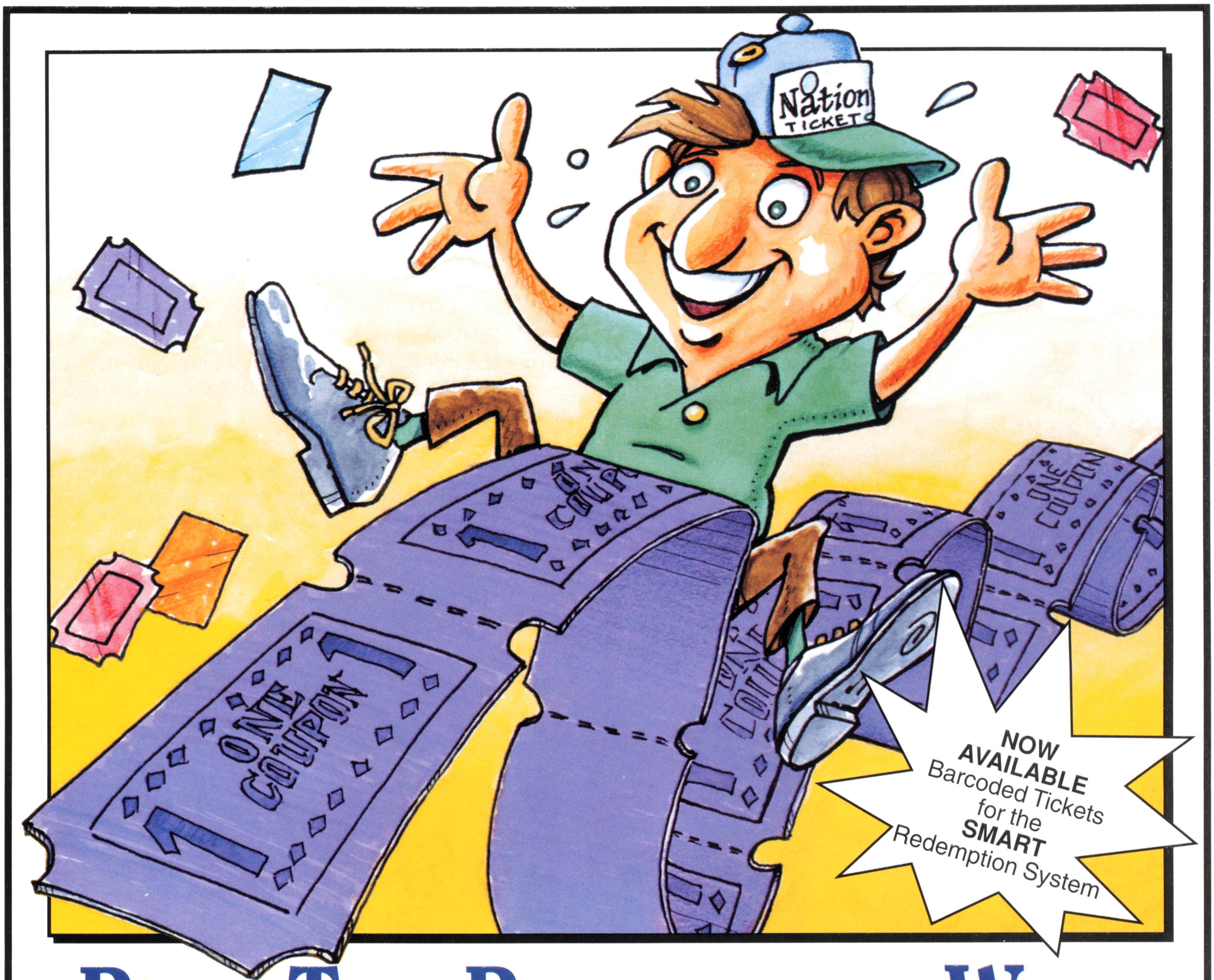
Internet gaming possible via Ecuador license

AMOA's Legalized Gaming Guidepost has brought attention to the fact that gaming will be available over the Internet in early 1997 through Internet Gaming Technologies Inc. The company has acquired rights to a gaming license issued by the Republic of Ecuador covering its interactive gaming service and virtual casino.

The service will not be offered in the United States. It will, however, be offered in certain international jurisdictions in Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, Australia, Asia, and Africa, which do not prohibit gaming over the Internet.

According to the Guidepost, the company's operations will be conducted pursuant to a non-exclusive license from CasinoWorld Holdings Ltd. The gaming license has been issued by the Ecuadoran government to Virtual Casinos Gaming Co., an affiliate of CasinoWorld.

A full range of gaming choices will be offered, from poker to roulette and craps to keno.



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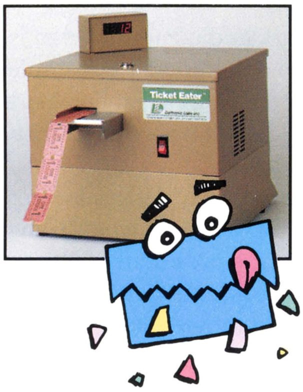

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International Calendar

JANUARY 9-12
SEKEP Expo '97, European Exhibition and Promotion Center, Athens, Greece. Call +30 1 825 1609; fax +30 1 821 1661.

JANUARY 21-24
ATEI '97, Earls Court, London, England. Call Peter Rusbridge, +44 171 713 0302; fax +44 171 713 0446.

JANUARY 22-25
IMA '97, Frankfurt Fairgrounds, Frankfurt, Germany. Call +49 211 901 9183; fax +49 211 901 9127.

FEBRUARY 19-20
AOU '97, Nippon Convention Center, Tokyo, Japan. Call +81 3 3253 5671; fax +81 3 3253 5688.

FEBRUARY 26-27
India Amusement Expo, Taj Palace Hotel, New Delhi, India. Contact William T. Glasgow Inc., (708)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.

APRIL 8-10
Theme Parks & Fun Centres Show, Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Call 011-4971-4-449611; fax 011-4971-4-446238.

APRIL 22-23
European Park Expo at Blackpool Pleasure Beach. Call Resorts Exhibitions, +44 1253 341033; fax +44 1253 401098.

JUNE 11-12
Asian Amusement Expo '97, Singapore International Convention & Exhibition Centre, Singapore. Call W.T. Glasgow Inc., (708)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.

JUNE 17-22
Expo-Diversiones '97, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. Call (3) 614-30-15; fax (3) 615-14-83.

OCTOBER 24-26
5th Park Show—Rimini, Italy. Contact Rimini Trade Fair Corp., +39-541-711-240; fax +39-541-711-519.

IT'S NO secret

◆ Namco Ltd. of Tokyo has acquired Atari Games Ireland Ltd. in Tipperary Ireland, a subsidiary of Atari Games Corp. in California, and renamed it Namco Ireland. The new president is Mike Nevin, president of Namco Europe. The factory will continue to run under the same local management. In addition, according to *Game Machine* magazine, Namco also acquired the exclusive distribution rights to Atari products in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

In other Namco news, the company has developed a postpaid system for coin-op games using the magnetic Namco Game Card. Plans call for the special card to be introduced to 50 Japanese arcades by March 1988.

◆ United Kingdom-based Computer Installations recently completed designing the networking system for the ticketing program at Segaworld in the Trocadero building in London's Picadilly Circus. The new facility is a joint venture between Japanese company Sega Enterprises Ltd. and Burford Holdings, Trocadero's owners. According to Computer Installations' managing director Trevor Taylor: "The design of such a network is imperative to the day-to-day operation."

◆ Sega Enterprises Ltd. of Tokyo is expected to establish a game distributing company (Sega Village Nine Distribution) with Village Nine Network Leisure in Melbourne, Australia, this year to exclusively distribute Sega products in New Zealand and Australia beginning with *Virtua Fighter 3*. This arrangement was prompted by a court decision over parallel imports of video games in Australia. Leisure & Allied Industries (LAI Group) no longer has exclusive sales rights for Sega products in the Australian market. The company plans to open a Segaworld in Sydney this spring.

The company also now produces a digital camera (DIGIO), which is more economical than most units on the market and may connect to the Saturn home video system or the Print Club coin-op printer in the future. Plans are to ship units by March to capture a share of Japan's digital camera market.

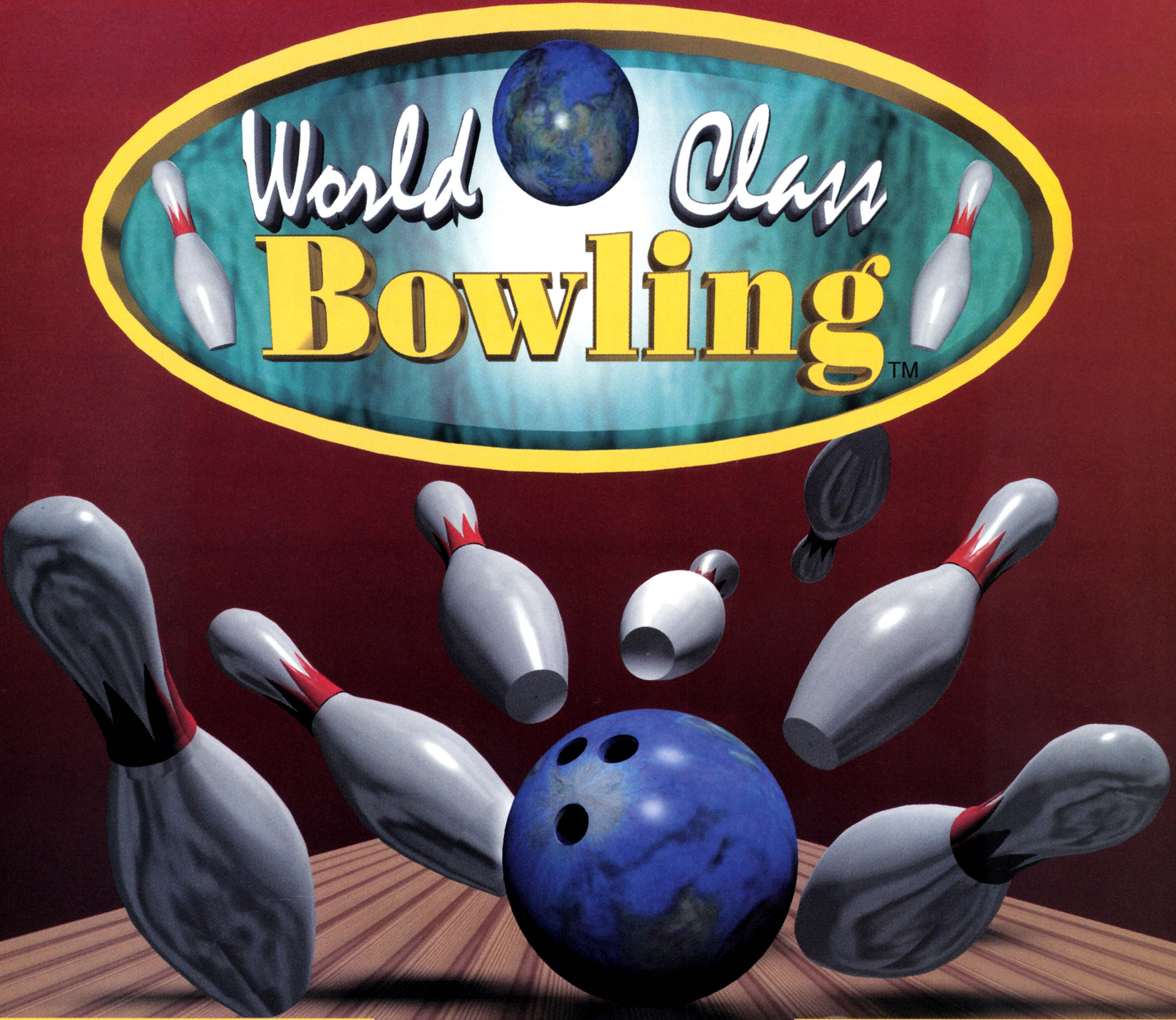
◆ Kaneko Co. Ltd. of Japan has introduced its 32-bit Super Kaneko Nova System along with its newest game, *Gal's Panic 4*. Other games are scheduled for release, with a maximum of 20 titles planned in puzzle, action, and fighting genres.

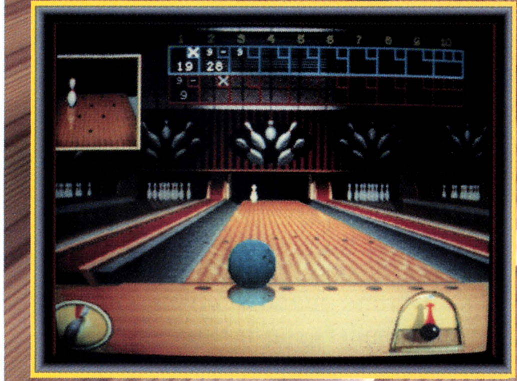
◆ New product awards were presented during International Leisure Industry Week in Birmingham, United Kingdom, with Vendotech's McCain Chip Vendor winning in the catering section of the show.

◆ The 21-year-old Kyoto Studio Park in Japan is undergoing a major renovation scheduled for completion in March. The facility will become a movie theme park with a new three-story Padios building that will house motion simulators and other attractions.

◆ Japan's oldest movie company, Nikkatsu Corp., is now a wholly-owned subsidiary of Namco of Japan. Namco president Masaya Nakamura is the president of Nikkatsu and Kunio Kawakami is vice president. Plans are to produce computer graphic-generated movies such as the popular "Toy Story." ▲

STRIKE IT RICH!





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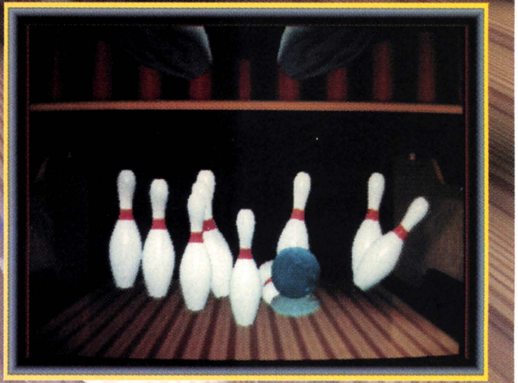

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KING PLUSH...
Thinking Bigger and Bigger AND BIGGER!

JUDY SHANNON

Never a small thinker, Pat Klasno has some very biiiiiiiig ideas for the future... just how big is big? Big as in jumbo plush, BIG? Big as in 40,000 square foot warehouse, and growing, BIG? Big as in 50 different plush suppliers to source from, BIG? Big as in an endless maze of boxes and boxes of inventory stacked 10 high, BIG?

Big ideas have no limitations with Pat Klasno, president and owner of King Plush. This Carson, Calif.-based leading supplier of high quality pre-packs for the skill crane industry, specializes in licensed, customized location specific skill crane mixes.

An entrepreneur at heart, at the young age of 7, Pat was selling celery stalks to his neighbors in Muskegon, Mich.

After purchasing the fresh stalks at the local celery farm, Pat would sell door to door, often making 50 cents per day. Even at 7, he was quite successful.

“In 1985 I was looking to fulfill a new challenge, so I decided to explore the skill crane business. I began with only one 25-cent crane machine. Can you believe that?” chuckles Klasno. He placed his investment in a movie theater and waited for results, but didn't have to wait long. “Although skill cranes were relatively unknown in Southern California, my crane instantly caught on, “It seemed like people were lined up around the block to try it. We had to coin it out daily or the coin box would get too heavy.” Within one year, Pat had a few hundred machines located throughout Los Angeles and Orange County, in a variety of establishments from bowling alleys to hotels.

Service! Service! Service!

At the start of his skill crane operation, Klasno had very little competition. It seemed that vending machine operators were not interested in a machine that required continual service seven days per week. Eventually other skill crane manufacturers and plush suppliers started appearing, and the skill crane industry took off. The success of Klasno's skill crane route operation would pave the way for what is now known as King Plush.

Big Ideas!

It was a few years later that Klasno had some very big ideas for his plush. “As

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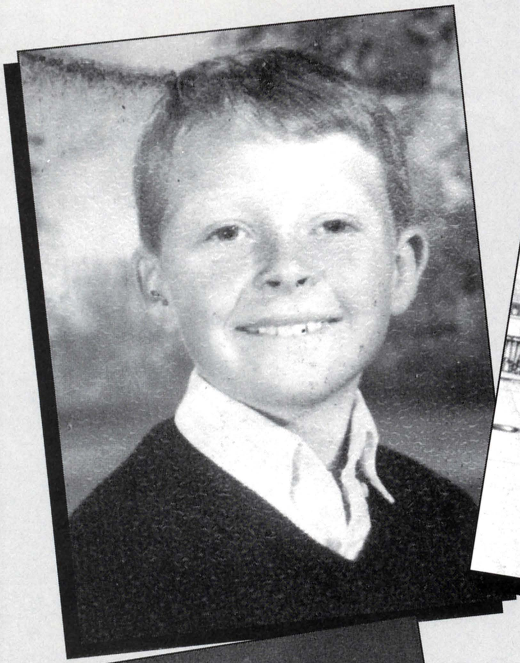
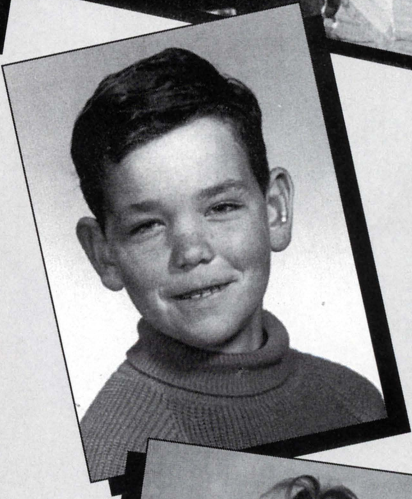
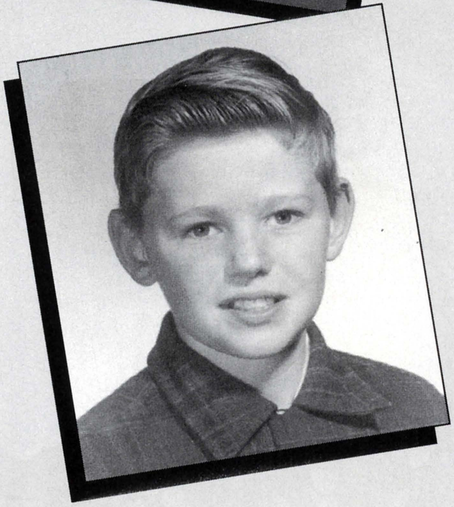
COVER
STORY

The King Plush staff still kids at heart!

Top (l-r): Vice President Tom Webb, President and owner Pat Klasno, and General Manager Chuck Thurber;
Middle (l-r): Angel Mingie, operations manager, Denise Davison, office manager, Jack Bresnahan, general manager;
Bottom (l-r): Judy Shannon, marketing director, Ed Barlow, warehouse manager, Norina Mingie, receptionist.







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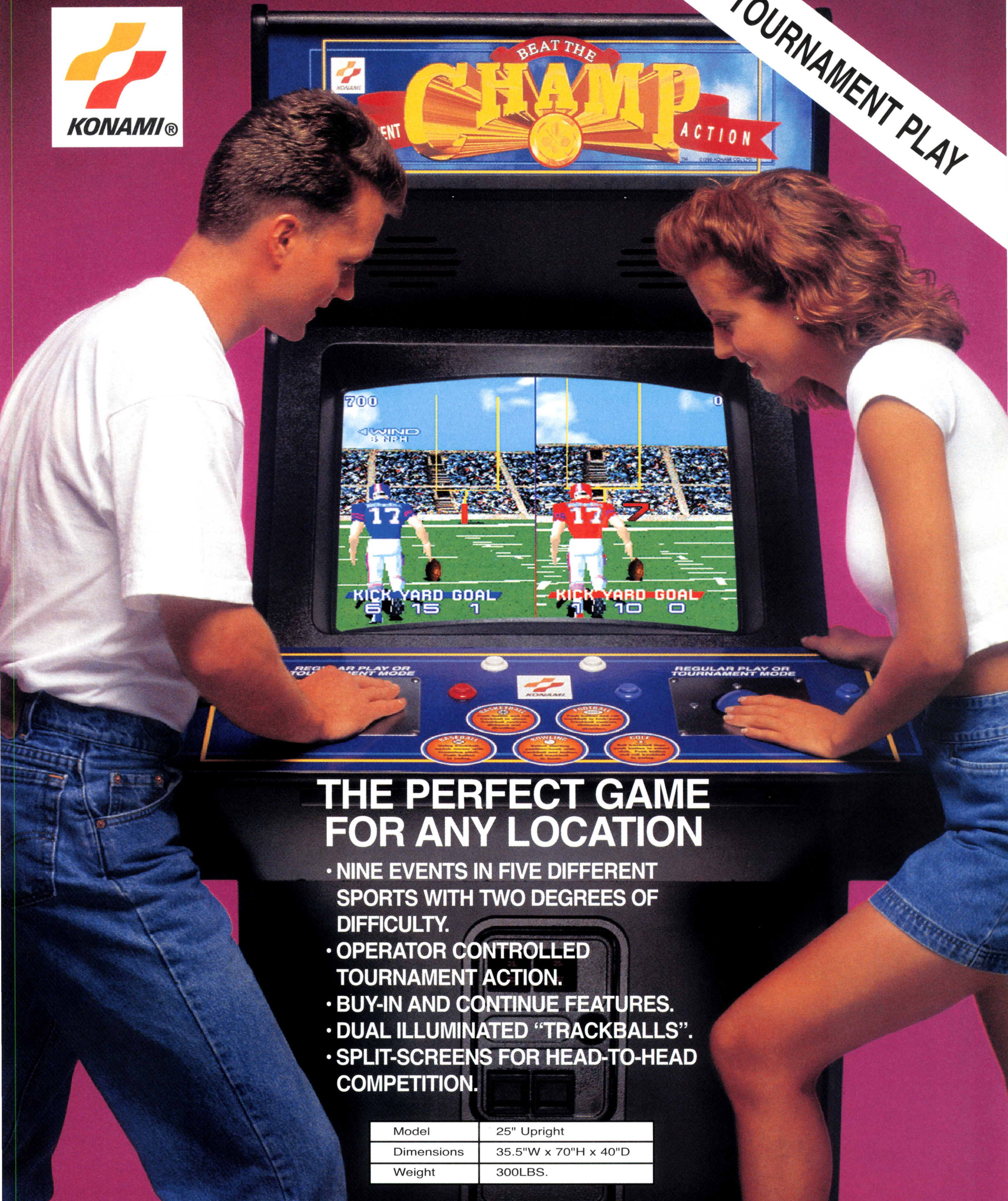
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Chuck Thurber, Angel Mingie and Pooh!

my crane business grew larger I was purchasing lots of plush, so it was very important that I was in control of the quality of my plush. I soon began buying my own plush in bulk and started preparing my very own pre-packs," recalls Klasno.

"A number of my industry friends were complaining about the lack of quality plush at good prices so I began selling them my own plush, more as a favor than anything else, and this is what it evolved into King Plush!" exclaims Klasno with a sweeping motion spanning the huge warehouse floor.

Today, with a 40,000-plus square foot warehouse, and a staff of over 30, King Plush services the requirements of thousands of very satisfied customers. "I have more than 50 different suppliers, therefore, I can offer the best plush mixes at the best prices!" exclaimed Klasno. "I'm able to source from several different suppliers because we're located in the hub of the import business -- Los Angeles. We don't get involved with gimmicks, come-ons or give-aways."

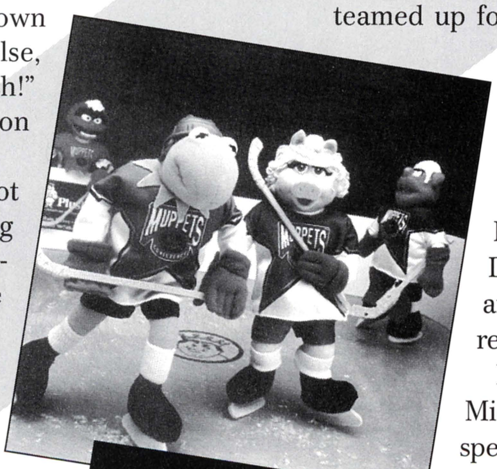
King Plush's Esmeralda

He added, "Suppliers have to make their money, and I won't cheapen our mixes to make up the difference. Quality plush is the only thing that I'll ever consider for our customers. Only soft, cuddly, irresistible, well-made stuffed toys!" And when we sell soft cuddlies-- the mainstay in the industry-- we make sure they're soft and squeezable, the kind a child would want to take to bed at night. That is the quality of plush we put in our very own cranes, and that is the quality we sell."

King Plush's Pinocchio!

Plenty of licensed plush

Last year King Plush entered into an agreement with Mission Crane Service, Inc., the exclusive plush supplier for Mission's Group Operator℠ Program. This year's big deal is with Disney's Mickey Mouse and it's time to drop the claw...never before has Disney's licensed Mickey Mouse teamed up for a skill crane pre-pack, until now! "And this ain't no Mickey Mouse Deal!" says Klasno. King Plush has opened the crane door for this 14 inch plush Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck, Daisey Duck, Goofy and Pluto which are now available for pre-packs, redemption, and trade-ups.



Muppets On Ice

Bound to increase profits, this Mickey Mouse line up is made to spec like a retail product, sporting high quality skin (plush) of vibrant, eye catching colors. "King Plush has a very thorough quality control process and each Disney character passed with flying colors!" explains Klasno. This process is so thorough that Mickey may have been a bit embarrassed at times!

Crane players will enjoy the value of King Plush's quality licensed products and crane operators will enjoy yielding higher profits.

King Plush's commitment to quality is complemented by a variety of popular licensed pieces such as Winnie the Pooh (6", 12" and jumbo plush sizes), Talking Pinocchio (14"and 9"), Esmeralda (16" and 9"), Flipper (4.5" to 18"), 11 inch figurines from Disney's "Pocahontas" and "Hunchback of Notre Dame" movies, the Muppets (11"), and now Disney's 14 inch Mickey Mouse line.

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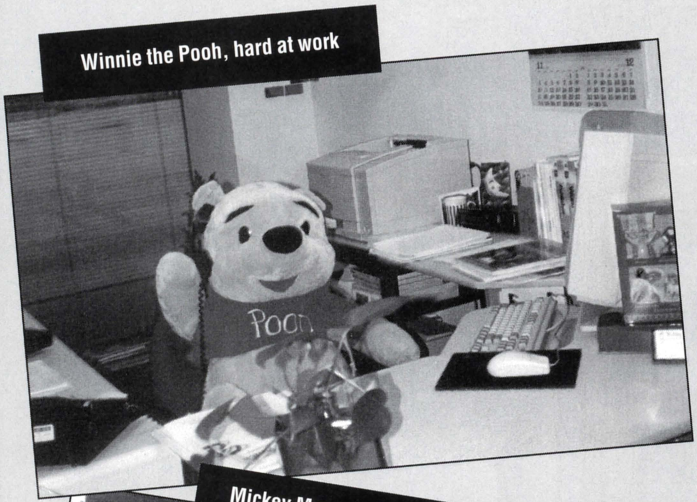
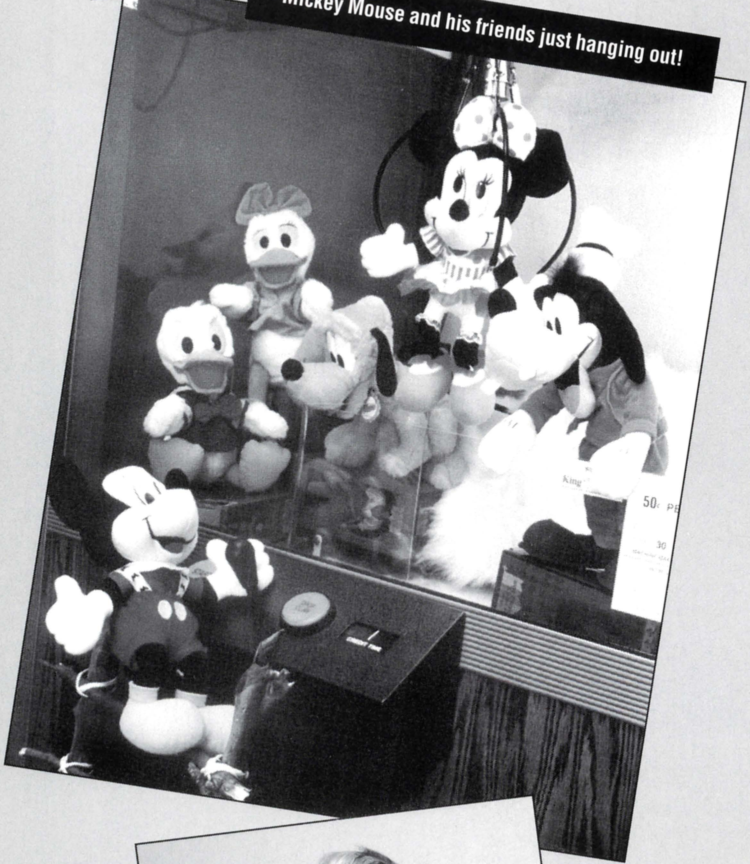
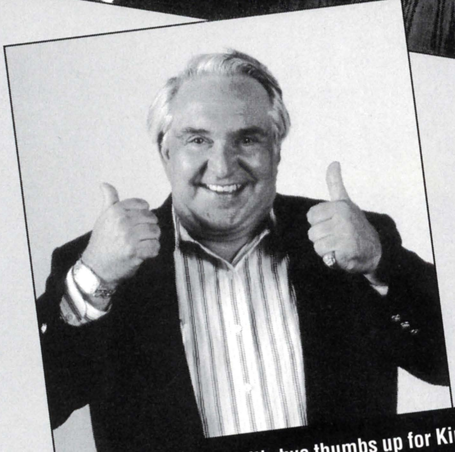
COVER STORY



Winnie the Pooh, hard at work



Mickey Mouse and his friends just hanging out!



It's two thumbs up for King Plush's Pat Klasno!

Behind Closed Doors!

"King Plush is where fun and merchandising go together! And we mean that!" chuckles Klasno. "We have a lot of fun here at King Plush because we really enjoy what we do. And I think that our customers can see that."

Klasno, as owner and president, has his hands full (of plush). He assumes all buying responsibilities. Ensuring strict quality control, he is the official toy tester and plush squeezer.

Chuck Thurber, general manager, joined King Plush in 1990. In addition to his general manager responsibilities, Chuck leads the direction for sales at King Plush. (And boy can Chuck dance!)

Thomas Webb, vice president, is a 12 year veteran of King Plush. In addition to the vast responsibilities of VP, Tom manages the skill crane route operations at King Plush's Klaslan Corporation.

Angel Mingie, operations manager, wears several hats (some of them are even the licensed sports caps that King Plush sells!). In addition to managing the office, Angel is responsible for sales at King Plush and sales for the Mission Crane Group℠ Operations.

Jack Bresnahan, credit manager (and resident comedian) well, you know what he does. For the past four years, Jack has shared his credit expertise with King Plush along with an occasional comedic relief!

Judy Shannon, marketing director, is the newest addition to the King Plush entourage. Judy provides the focus for the advertising, marketing and public relations in addition to coming up with some pretty zany ideas!

Ed Barlow, warehouse manager, manages daily warehouse operations (All 40,000 square feet!), inventory control, quality control, shipping (same day!), and receiving.

Denise Davidson, office manager/accounts payable (and frequent customer relations representative and executive assistant) performs daily office operations, ensuring that King Plush is operating smoothly.

Norina Mingie, receptionist/customer relations representative is frequently pulled in various directions, depending on the craze of the day.

"We've got a lot of new and exciting things happening in the near future, like lots of licensed plush. Crane operators and redemption merchandisers will definitely benefit from these new ideas in store for King Plush!" exclaims Klasno. So, make sure to stay tuned for more fun and excitement!

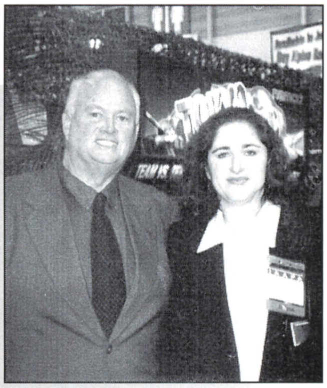
For more information on King Plush, visit the King Plush website at (http://www.kingplush.com) or call toll free within the U.S. (800)473-3402 or (310)834-0499. ▲

BEYOND THE PLAYFIELD

A surprise birthday party was held for Barbara Nappi of Sega GameWorks during the IAAPA convention and trade show in New Orleans in late November. Here is Barbara with Ken Anderson (l), Al Stone, and fellow Sega GameWorks staff members who added their good wishes on her special day.

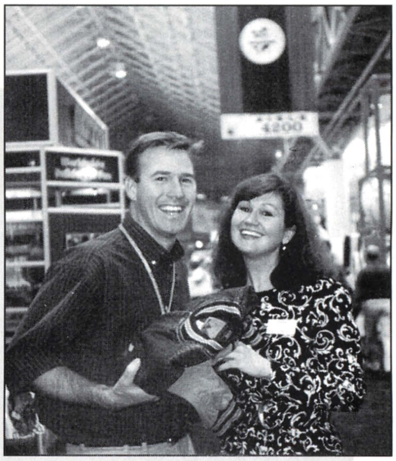
Midway Games recently presented its NHL-licensed video game *Open Ice* to the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto, Canada. Said Brian Black, vice president of marketing for the Hockey Hall of Fame, "*Open Ice* helps fulfill the Hall's mandate to provide our guests with an entertaining celebration of the best of hockey." Midway's design team head Jack Haeger commented, "This is an incredible honor. The Hockey Hall of Fame is the ultimate tribute to the sport of hockey, and we are so excited to be able to share our game with hockey fans from around the world." Pictured, (l-r): *Open Ice* design team members Jack Haeger, Martin Martinez, Carlos Pesina, and Mary Ann Rohn present the game to Scott North of the Hockey Hall of Fame during the induction ceremony.

Mike Silverstein of merchandise supplier S & A Intl. and his daughter Christy show off the company's popular Top Banana plush at the IAAPA convention and trade show. They are surrounded by plush tigers, lions, and dalmatian puppies that were part of the display.



Namco's Shane Breaks stopped us at the IAAPA convention and trade show to introduce the new international sales representative, Elizabeth Borin. Borin is based in London, England, and she will be overseeing sales in Europe. Welcome aboard, Elizabeth!

Virtual Concepts has released the names of the winner and runner-up in its first nationwide fog juice contest. Fog juice is the substance that creates eerie smoke-and-mirror effects in laser tag arenas and other attractions. Virtual Concepts is one of the largest fog juice, lighting, and sound suppliers to FECs, laser tag arenas, and bowling and skating centers in the United States. Winners of the contest were selected at random, drawn from over 100 entries received from operators of Q-Zar, Laser Storm, Zap Zone, Ultrazone, LaserTrek, Laser Star, and other facilities. Laser Storm of Winston-Salem, N.C., won first place and a year supply of fog juice valued at $1,664; United Skates of America of Columbus, Ohio, was the runner-up with a one-month supply. Virtual Concepts staff, (l-r): Melissa Bell, William Motchar, Jennine Poorbaugh, and Diya Williams.



Konami of America held competitions on new games, *Beat the Champ* and *Dead Eye,* at the IAAPA convention and trade show and awarded T-shirts and sports bottles to winners. Here Mary Hermanson of Konami presents a jacket to grand prize winner Ron Gilley of Chemical Lights.

PARTS DEPT.
Dixie-Narco WORLDWIDE

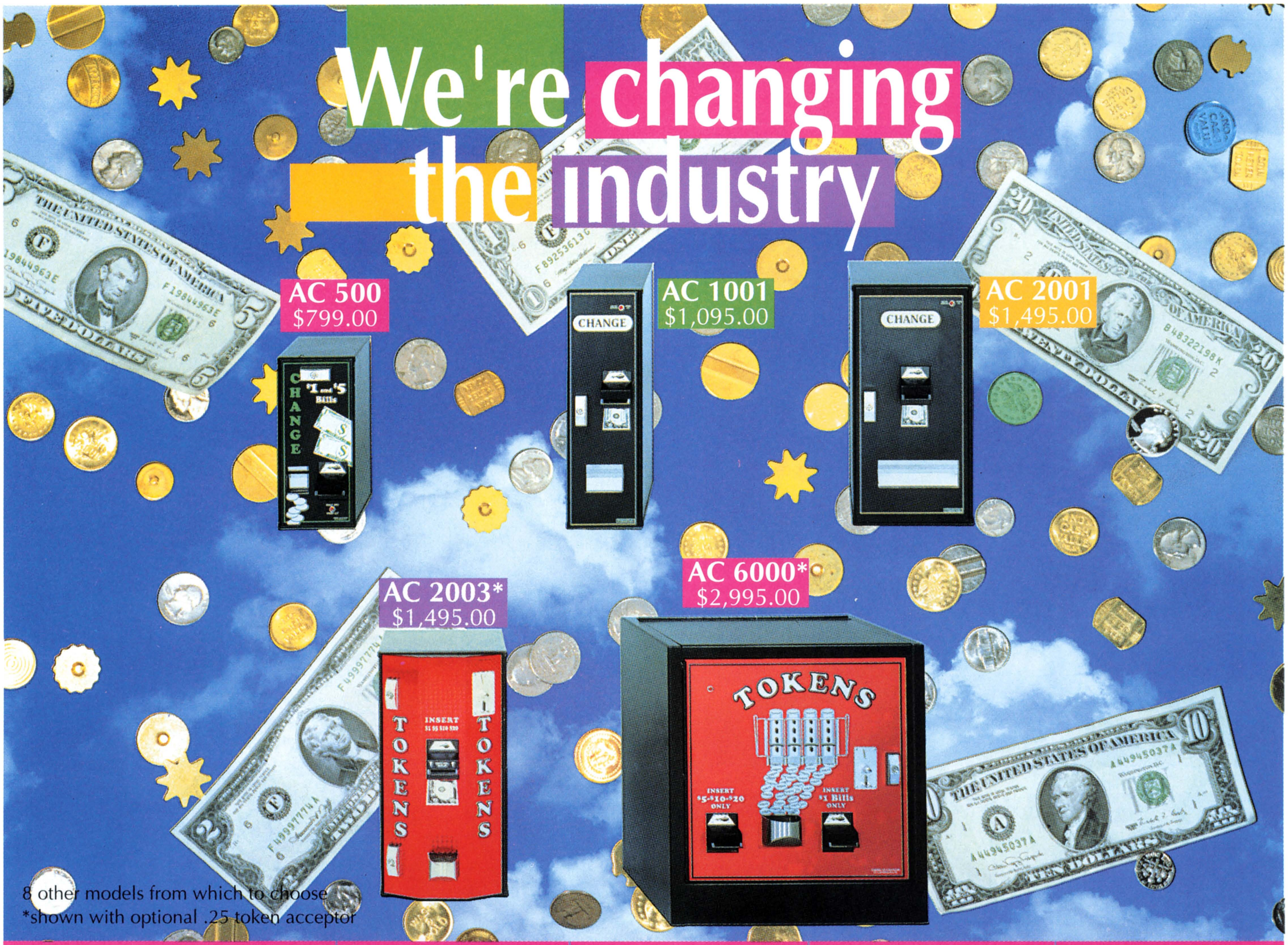
Greater Southern Dist. Co. in Atlanta reports hosting a Rowe CD jukebox service school that was attended by over 50 operators. Topics included troubleshooting amplifiers, basket assembly repairs, and programming the central computer control unit. According to Greater Southern's vice president Rubin Piha, "elevating the operators' level of expertise was a primary goal" of the educational session, Judging from the feedback, the mission was accomplished.

You can leave the industry, but the industry never leaves you! Jim Newlander, formerly of Atari Games, is a good example. Although he's retired, he took the time to send us a note telling us that he enjoys receiving the magazine so he can keep up with what's going on in the industry. Here's what Jim had to say: "I enjoyed the article on the (New Orleans) Garden District bars and restaurants (Nov. pgs. 162-165). Many were familiar to me but there were quite a few that were new to me. I hope to try them some day. I've enjoyed retirement and have been doing a lot of traveling. I also had triple bypass surgery in September and am feeling great!"

PLAY METER Magazine

Kristen Durand, granddaughter of Play Meter publisher Carol Lally, was poised to man the booth and greet attendees at the recent IAAPA convention and trade show. The smiling first-grader, who already is a veteran of numerous trade events, may follow in the family tradition.

Alpha-Omega Amusements and Boomtown Casinos have proven to be an unbeatable combination. Boomtown's corporate director of entertainment Jeff Victor recently praised Alpha-Omega: "We have been working with them since 1994. At our oldest facility, in Reno, we had been using a different operator up until a year ago. Since going to Alpha-Omega we have experienced a 30 percent jump in revenue." Victor credited Alpha-Omega founder and president Frank Seninsky with helping in the choice of games and property layouts, as well as supplying a top-quality setup crew (Patrick, Dan, and Tom) to install the games and train the staff. Boomtown Casinos operates four gaming facilities: Reno and Las Vegas, Nev., Biloxi, Miss. (dockside), and Harvey, La. (riverboat). Boomtown foresees continued growth with Alpha-Omega central to its plans.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TOKENS
INSERT
TOKENS
TOKENS
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8 other models from which to choose
*shown with optional .25 token acceptor

Models	AC 500	AC 1001 / AC 1005*	AC2001/AC2003*/AC2005	AC 6000
Standard Capacity	600 quarters / tokens	1,600 quarters / tokens	3,200 quarters / tokens	12,00 quarters / tokens
Optional Capacity	1,000 quarters / tokens	2,800 quarters / tokens	5,6000 quarters / tokens	-
Payouts	hopper loaded quarter or token	hopper loaded, quarter nickel, dime or token	dual hopper optional .25 token acceptor	dual hopper optional .25 token acceptor
$1 Coin Payout	yes with a kit	yes	yes	yes
Validator Acceptance	$1,$2,$5, $10	$1, $2,$5,$10,$20	$1, $2, $5, $10, $20	$1, $2, $5, $10, $20
Validator Interchangeability	no	yes	yes	no
Token Bonus Payout	no	yes	128 options	128 options
Base and Header Kits	yes	yes	yes	base only
*Rear Loaders	no	yes	yes	no
Options Fronts	no	change or tokens	change or tokens	change or tokens
Optional Alarm System	yes	yes	yes	yes

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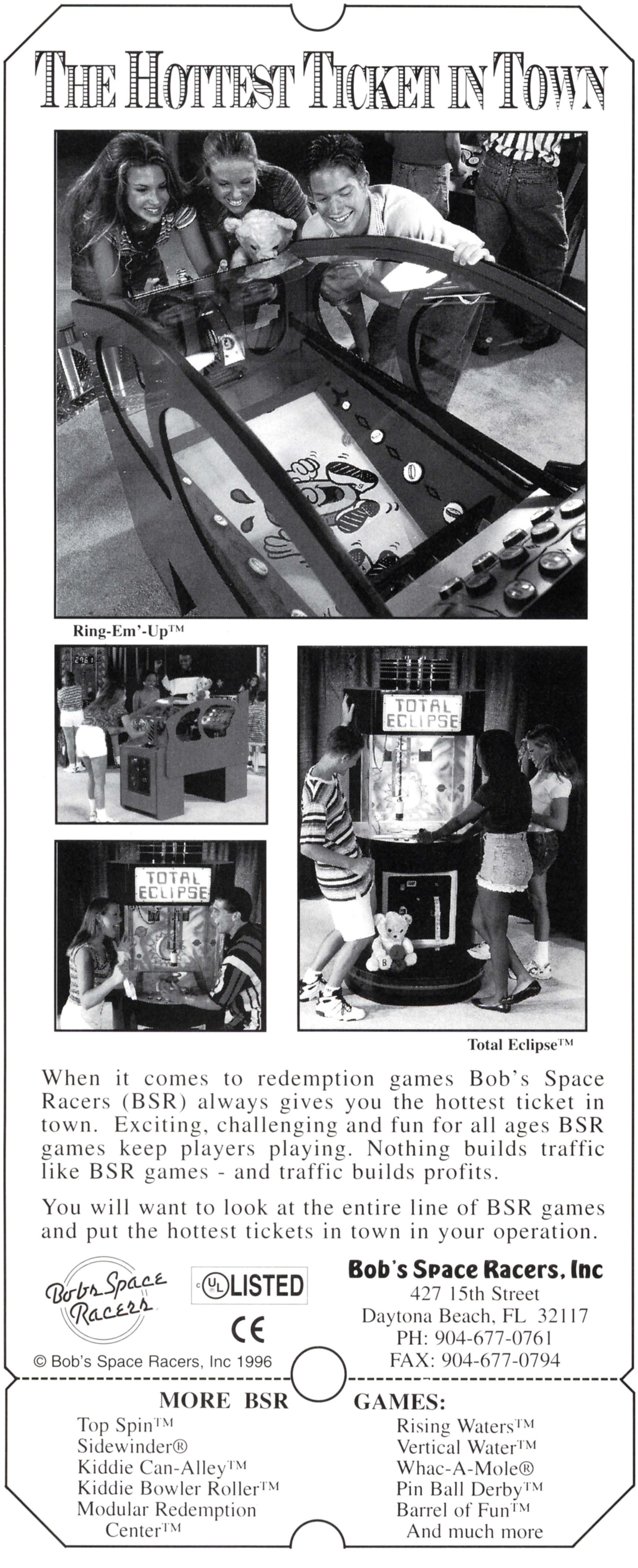

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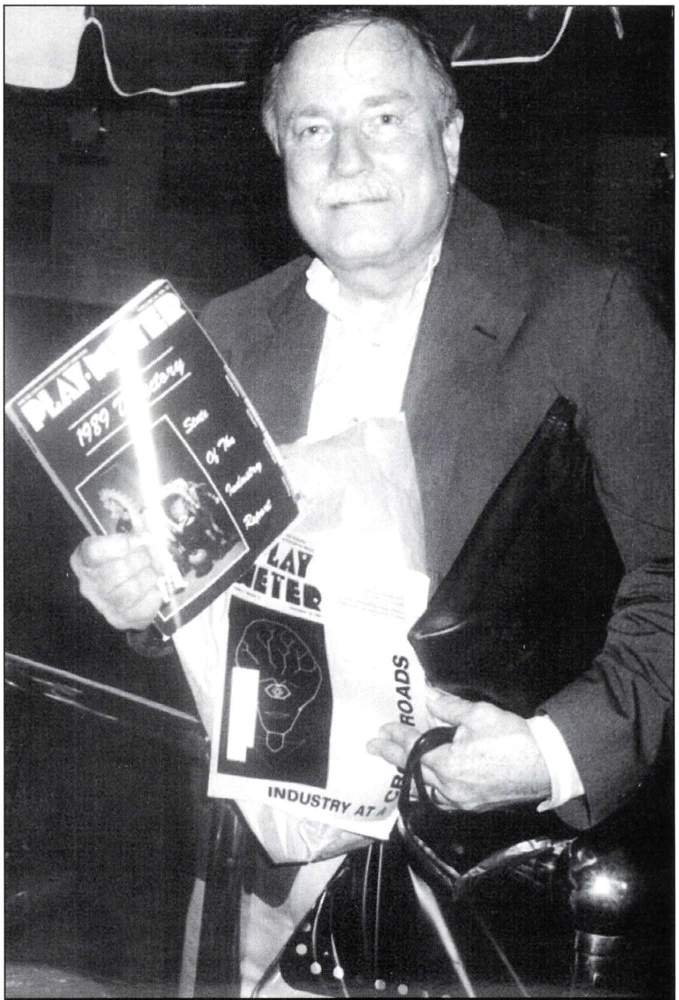

Dick Bueschel, author of the new book, "Encyclopedia of Pinball, Volume 1," had the honor of starting off the "roast" of retiring amusement industry veteran and pinball game designer Steve Kordek at November's 12th Pinball Expo in Rosemont, Ill. He titled his introduction, "Steve Kordek: the Prince." In part the rhymed verse read: "Steve's talent is not what you can call a gift. It's learned on the board once the ball leaves the lift. It's playing and poking and making creation. Out of nothing much more than i-mag-i-nation. Steve learned it the hard way by being alone. And never accepting a place as a clone. When merely a kid he entered a door. That decided his life forevermore." One of Dick's other books, "Lemons, Cherries, and Bell Fruit-Gum," covered 100 years of slot machine history and was listed in several holiday gift catalogs for corporate giving. Dick is pictured with some "classic" issues of Play Meter at the 1990 Pinball Expo. He can be reached at (847)253-0791. ▲

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FROM LEFT FIELD

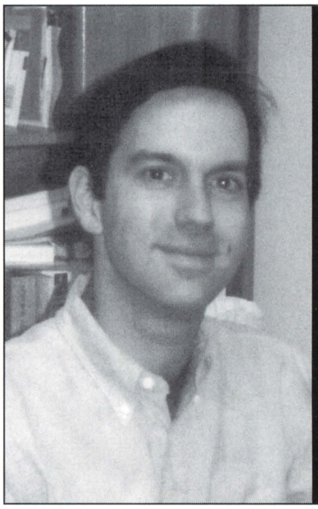
Listening to the REAL EXPERTS

The infamous journalist and professional wild man Dr. Hunter S. Thompson likes to say that when the going gets weird, the weird turn pro.

The going has clearly gotten weird in this industry with a number of proposals on the table that could turn the business on its ear in the next few years, and while the good doctor's philosophy of thrusting himself into any story with a vengeance may pose exciting prospects it also bespeaks an arrogance on the part of a journalist claiming expert status.

As reporters we have a duty to inform our readers of events affecting their business, but we have an equal obligation to listen to those same readers, the real pros, in order to better understand our industry.

In doing just that recently I came across a real gem, a jukebox operator's perspective on the pros and cons of new music technology both as it is being presented currently and in terms of its future potential. That operator was Manley Lawson of Lawson Music in Winter Haven, Fla., who has also proven to be a wonderful resource when researching government relations issues in his state.



STEVE WHITE

The thrust of Manley's argument is the need for forging a comprehensive strategy to digital music sales, not unlike the proposal being put forward by Microsoft for video games. The ideal would be one group building hardware for operators, who could in turn access multiple sources for music programming.

Under any such arrangement, the performing artists' societies would have to play a major role, and the first order of business is a long-term copyright agreement across the board. This would avoid arbitrary increases on an annual basis, as well as varying royalties from individual providers.

Second, is the need for reasonable prices and a structure that would allow operators to license a song either permanently or for a certain period of time. According to Manley, operators are going to be unwilling to pay a certain royalty percentage on a pay-per-play basis, thus opening up their books to music providers and/or manufacturers who are also providing programming.

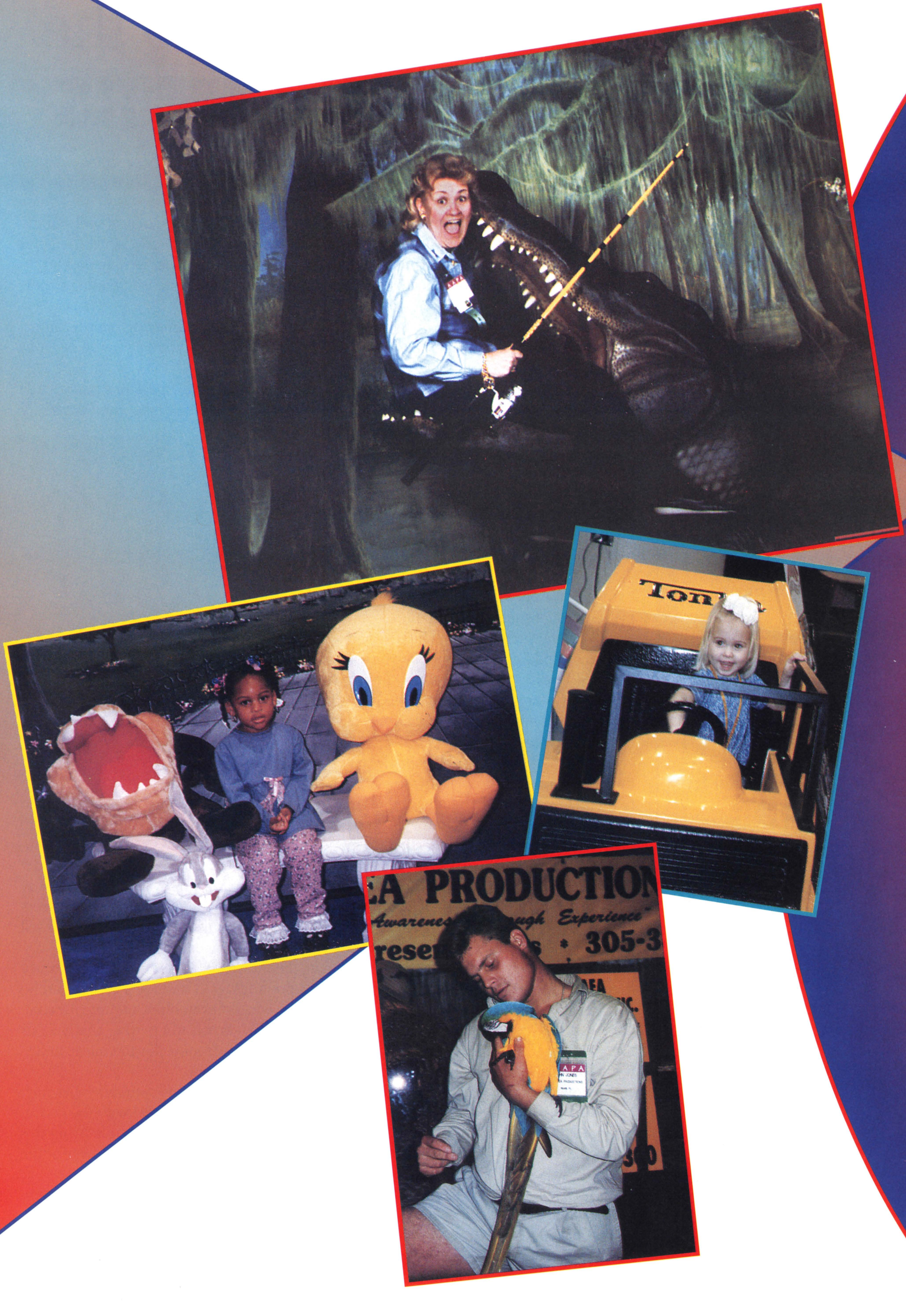
While the first challenge may be feasible in the short run, with royalty groups already expressing some willingness to help operators in approaching music companies, the second hurdle is more difficult because it entails convincing those same companies to sell music to operators at less cost than they are currently making on CDs.

The key to achieving that goal is convincing the music industry that the jukebox is a marketing tool with promotional opportunities abounding. In Manley's view it can be used for cross promotions with local radio stations, concert promoters, and record companies. It can also be used to help market lesser known artists not getting as much air time on the radio. Under these scenarios, it would be advantageous for the music industry to "practically give" music to jukebox operators, Manley said.

So how do operators achieve this goal? Well, AMOA is currently pursuing just such an initiative with its consultant Diamond Time, which has been charged with the task of bringing this issue to music companies, and operators like Manley can help bring this point home in their local communities by demonstrating the promotional power of the jukebox.

In fact, it is operators like Manley who bring a level-headed point of view to a seemingly chaotic time in our industry. I hope I have summarized his perspective correctly, and if I haven't I'm sure to hear from him again. And so will you!

So as the going gets weird, I prefer to retain my amateur status and remain on the sidelines, listening and learning from those industry pros who have invested their lives in this business and weathered any number of technological changes over the years. ▲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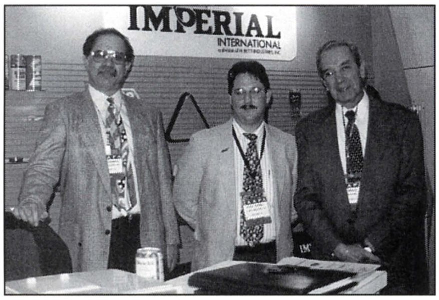
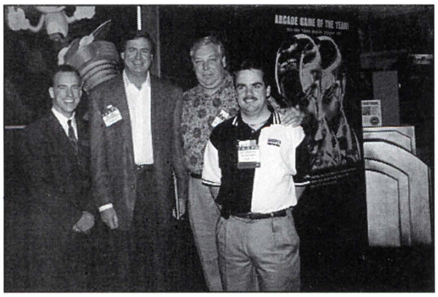
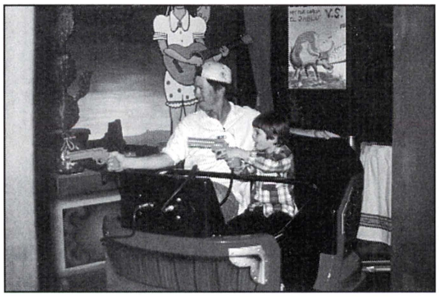
Left--National Ticket's Bill Owen and Maureen Mulhall stop for a quick picture. **Center**--Between Falgas USA's *UFO* and *Taxi Baby* are Eddie Sanchez and Clara Fernandez. **Right**--Deltronic Lab's Colin Horniak shows off the new *Ticket Tex* ticket counter/validator.

Left--At Laser Star Technologies, Bruce Barker is flanked by Julieanna (l), Iris, and Rosie the snake. **Center**--Carol Longacre (l) and Carol Lally of Play Meter try the video photo booth at Irata Inc. **Right**--Bonnie Theard (c) of Play Meter stops to chat with Gordon (l) and Jeff Smart of Smart Industries.



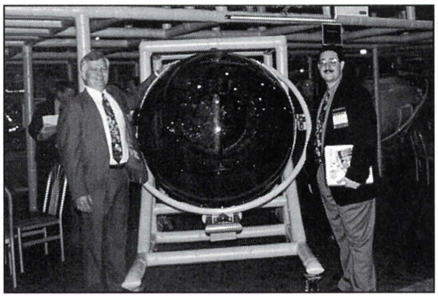
Left--H. Betti staff at the Imperial booth, (l-r): Neal Rosenberg, Steve Russell, and Joe Migueles. **Center**--From left: Richard Crompton, Neal Rosenberg, John Crompton and Ben Toro by Cromptons' games at the Fun Merchants booth. **Right**--New Orleans Novelty's Mark Boasberg (l) learns about *Key Catcher* from American Sammy's Maria Fotinopoulos, Rick Rochetti, and David Cane (r).


ARCADE GAME OF THE YEAR!



Steer Crazy

Left--From left: Sega GameWorks' Pete Gustafson, Shaffer Dist.'s Bill Kraft, and Damon's Jon Self and Rick Brenstual. **Center**--Charles LeBell and his son Andrew enjoyed the Sally shoot 'em up ride. **Right**--Watching the crowd play *Stir Crazy* are Fun Industry's Randy Hill (r) and Susie and Mel LaForce.



REDEMPTION
FASTEST TURNAROUND

Left--At Happ Controls, (l-r): Les Gottchall, Rob Richey, Beatriz Cacheux, and Sue Happ. **Center**--Omni/Little Tikes' Larry Reed (l) and Jeff Kagan. **Right**--Part of the Broyles family from Muncie Ticket, (l-r): Claudia, Carole, and David.

IAAPA '96

If you can't find it here, IT DOESN'T EXIST!

It was food, fun, and friends to the max at the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Convention and Trade Show in New Orleans, La., in late November. The massive show floor held a vast array of products from banana bites, fruit shockers, mini donuts, pizza, and Danish cones to neon lights, carousels, redemption equipment, video games, pinball, rides, laser tag, and simulators. In all, nearly 1,000 booths—the entire convention center—were decked out with their wares.

You could get a wax impression of your hand, have your face painted, learn how to carve a carousel horse, and practice looking inconspicuous when going for that third or forth cup of dippin' dots! The costumes and characters were cute and adorable as well as scary and gruesome.

Characters and costumes were in abundance. Here Becki Mitchell stops for a photo with one of them.

While the show has been in existence for 78 years, it's only recently that it has attracted traditional coin-op folks. The reason more coin machine operators, distributors, and manufacturers are finding a niche in the amusement parks and attractions arena is that both industries are finding common ground under the broad umbrella of entertainment.

Entertainment is entertainment, whether it's gigantic, white knuckle roller coasters or photo booths. Large amusement parks are interested in redemption and video games as complements to their traditional equipment, while family entertainment centers are often looking to add an attraction previously seen only at amusement parks.

Jim Roberts of James Industries explained, "In one sense the coin-op business is contracting, in another it's expanding. Everything is getting to be big entertainment. This show is like a one-stop shop. There's something for everyone."

But an expanding entertainment market is only one reason for the growing numbers of coin-op people attending the show. Another vital reason is the international flavor. Nearly every exhibitor we talked with noted that it was the international market that drew them to the show in the first place and they weren't disappointed. Terry Hampton of Hampton Co., for example, said, "The biggest change I've seen is international guests. There are enough that you want to have interpreters in your booth. Some people are still in good shape in Mexico, and they're coming to this show to prepare for the time when their economy improves. People enjoy coming to this show to enrich their businesses. IAAPA has taken a leadership role with seminars and getting people together to share information. America and IAAPA are the world leaders in entertainment."

Jim Gorman of Sega Pinball agreed, "This is a very important show for the pinball and video side of the business because of the international recognition. We've seen more customers from South America than any other part of the world."

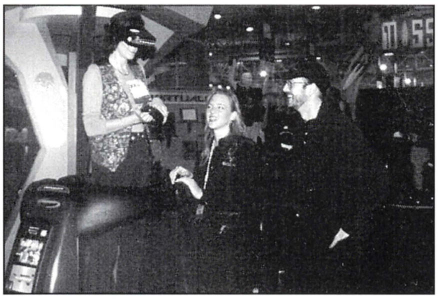
Other comments on the international attraction included these from Sal Mirando of Coastal Amusements and Mel LaForce of Fun Industries: "This is the biggest and best show. It has always attracted international buyers, not international lookers," observed Mirando. "This is our big show for the foreign market. Our presence overseas is directly attributable to IAAPA," noted LaForce.

The third reason why coin-op people are considering it more important to attend IAAPA is finding new ideas. Darren Decatoire of Konami made this comment: "People are coming here for new ideas for their businesses. In the FEC business you have to constantly come up with ideas that attract people. Your job is to ensure that when people leave they want to go tell everyone about your facility."

Dale Walker of Amusement Services told us, "I want to be a resource to my customers for more than just video and pinball. My customers are looking for things to attract traffic flow and I am here seeking out attractions to fill that

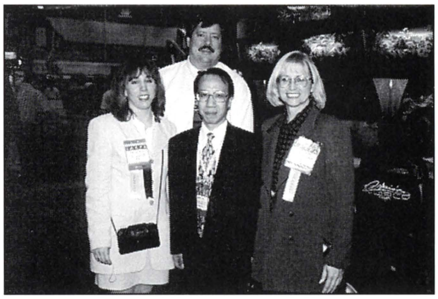
Tasmanian Devil

Left--"Large gumball machines are hot and Big Top USA has them," say Big Top's Dennis Cioffi and Deborah Forte. **Center**--SNK's Jeff Yantz and Nikole Viola demonstrate the popular *Neo Print* photo stand. **Right**--AMA Dist.'s Jim Pietrangelo (l) bumps into old friend Tim Jackson of Planet Earth Entertainment.



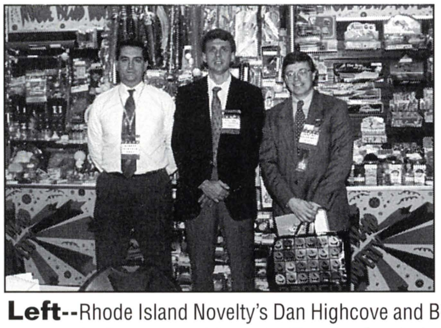
Left--From left: Seidel Amusement Machine's Ed Seidel, Chuck Ohler, Phyllis Seidel, and Bob Rakel. **Center**--Rhonda Ramage of Van Stone Conveyor plays *3-D Pac-Man* as Virtuality's Norie Bauer and Mike Adams watch. **Right**--From left: G.L. Technologies' Steve Novak, Cromptons' John Crompton, G.L.'s Laurie-Jean Greene, and Cromptons' Richard Crompton.

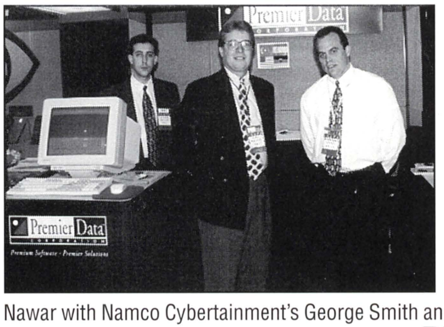
BENCHMARK ENTERTAINMENT



Left--By Konami's *Road Rage*, (l-r): Southgate's Jim Aitken, Konami's Mike Rudowicz, Southgate's John Gatens, and Konami's Mary Hermanson. **Center**--From left: Benchmark's Stephan Renaud and Donna Kress with Astro's John Nelson in front of the new *Big Haul.* **Right**--By *Cruis'n World*, (l-r): Williams' Christa Woss and Joe Hartman, Entropy's Henry Yeh, and Williams' Lenore Sayers.

Left--Plush Appeal's Catherine Fletchinger (l) and Joanne Jennings are Popeye pals. **Center**--At Ascension Productions' Lazer Runner booth, (l-r): Ken Schurek, Patricia, Troy Schnelle, and Cherie. **Right**--Namco Cybertainment's Darin Pilcher (c) joins Bay Tek's Larry Treankler and Lisa Basten.





Left--Rhode Island Novelty's Dan Highcove and Bob Nawar with Namco Cybertainment's George Smith and a display of prizes. **Center**--Accounting/software controls are the subject with Premier Data's Javier Martinez and Al Gietl and Data Eye's Matt Elliman. **Right**--The happy crew at Atari Games, (l-r): Alexandra Donnelly, Derryl DePriest, and Jackie Sherman.

need. In fact, I'm looking at some of these large rides that are usually only considered for amusement parks to recommend to my FEC customers. I can see these types of rides being an attraction."

Mark Blum of United Distributors explained that part of his job is acting as a consultant. "My customers come to me for advice and I have to know what is out there. They expect me to offer suggestions and I'm getting some ideas from this show."

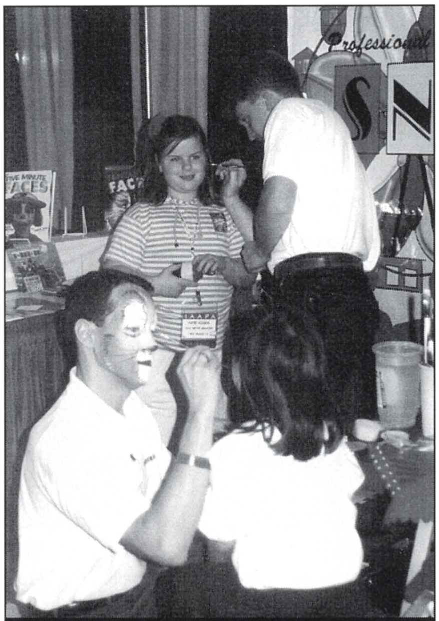
We were surprised at the number of coin-op people we saw walking the exhibit floor and asked them what they were looking for at the show. As expected, we got a variety of responses:

Jim Franz and Arthur Gage of H.A. Franz Distributing told us, "We operate at Astro World in Texas so we have to be on top of what is going on. We're here seeing what's new and what Astro World wants. We have to know what's out there."

Vicki Sieben of M.H. Associates was armed with a list of requests from her customers: "One of my customers wants a trackless train, one is interested in bulk vending, and another wants me to take a look at the virtual reality. In addition to all that, I'm walking around taking a look at other things as well."

It was impossible to find even one exhibitor who was disappointed in the show. The traffic flow through the massive show was unabating throughout the four days. But a simple head count was not enough to find out that those at the show were not just looking, they were buying. Said Ted Sloan of Bob's Space Racers, "This is our number one show for the size of the booth and for the number of sales and customers. If you're in the amusement business and need something, it's here. If you can't find it here, it probably doesn't exist!"

Tom Siemieniec of Namco offered this comment: "There are a lot of serious attendees here. We have to get people out of their homes and into the arcades to have fun. The only way to do that is with interactive games you can't play at home. And this is the show to find what you need."



Face painting was one of the fun things attendees found to do.

Other comments included these:

"At other shows operators tend to take the equipment for granted. They glance at it but aren't real serious. It seems that the people looking at equipment here are looking to buy."

"Traditional coin machine operators must all be from the Show-Me state of Missouri; they look at equipment and all they can say is, 'nah! Show me!"

"There are a lot of ideas at this show. There are things that are successful at amusement parks that could work in an FEC, perhaps not on as big of a scale, but you could adapt an idea."

NEW PRODUCTS

In the coin-op arena there were several new products shown, in addition to some previously seen at AMOA or Fun Expo just prior to IAAPA. While we have mentioned some of the coin-op games here, there was a lot more to see. Don't forget to read the following story on the high-tech equipment and laser tag.

AAMA has hosted a booth for its members for several years. Many of them have branched out with their own booths. This time products seen in AAMA's booth ranged from Arachnid's *English Mark Darts* to Valley/Tornado's *Table Soccer*. Other manufacturers represented in the booth included Atari, Bay Tek, Data East, Fabtek, Island Design, Jaleco, Konami, Namco, and Rowe.

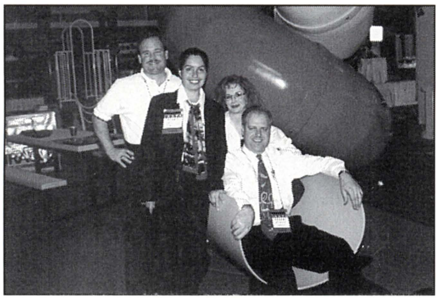
At Acclaim/Laser-Tron, there was *Birdie Putt*, *Super Solar Spin*, and *Stack-Em!* among the company's newest products. *Birdie Putt* challenges players to thrilling competition in putting skills. They take their best shots at target holes on the putting green; the closer they get the more points accumulate. *Super Solar Spin* is a redemption game with the new Insta-Prize feature. Players can win up to 10 different prizes and it's easy to program. *Stack-Em!* is a new twist on an old favorite, the bowler alley. Players roll balls up the alley and try to stack them for high scores.

You couldn't help but notice the crane at the Advanced Games & Engineering booth. No, you couldn't win a fuzzy puppy or a baseball cap, but you could get a lobster! Designed for restaurants, the crane allows customers to choose their lobster for dinner.

The American Sammy booth was abuzz with activity as showgoers tried their hand at *Key Catcher* and *Ghost Train* and then got their fortune told by the *Prophecy of the Pharaoh* machine. Key Catcher is what we call a sleeper. Since its introduction it's taken off like wild fire. It's a crane with a robotic arm that gives players more control. The company bills it as a merchandiser, vending machine, and amusement game rolled into one.

Ghost Train, a ticket redemption piece, challenges players to stop the spinning wheels with three buttons. There are rotating lights for a special bonus.

Astro Distributing showed its *Round 'N Round* skill stop game and *Shot Clock 2* novelty game that awards sports balls.



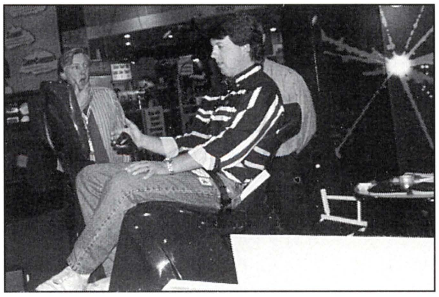
Master Pitching Machine

Left--Soft Play's crew at play, (l-r): Jim Howell, Pam Johnson, Rhonda Boggess, and Ken Schober. **Center**--Brothers Joe Giovagnoli (l) and Jim Giovagnoli show off the A55 Pitching Machine. **Right**--From left: SNK's Tracy Tate, Tommy Lynn, and Tony Marquez.

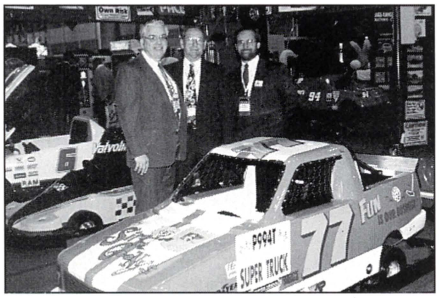
Left--By McFadden Systems' simulator, (l-r): Thomas Do-Sik Shinn, Bert McFadden, and Craig Barr. **Center**--In front of the Adventure Quest M-4 unit are Michael Sawdey (l) and Bruce Howland. **Right**--Dynamic Vision's Qadeer Ahmend shows his VR unit to Sherm Buck of Precision Tool.

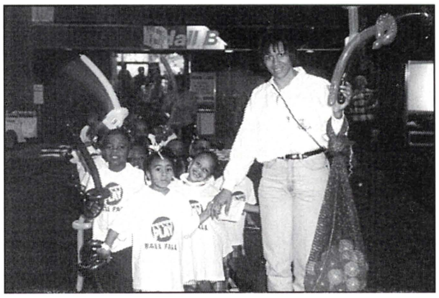
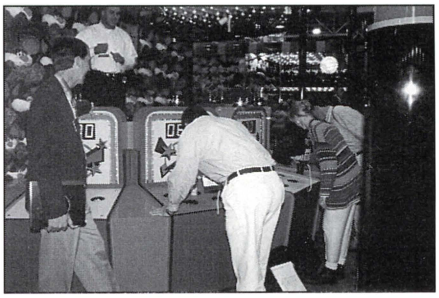
GRAVITY RETURN TROLLEY

Left-The Play Smart group, (l-r): Steve Root, Howard Weaver, Darrell Weaver, Lorene Weaver, and Delbert Weaver. **Center**--Jim Chapman (l) of Immersive Technologies welcomes Stan Jarocki (c) as Jim Jarocki shows off the Kimera VR unit. **Right**--From left: Par 3 Amusement's Steve Aquilino and FKL Kartworld's Joe Marino, Ron Young, and Charlie Diavto.



Left--P & E's Mike McWilliams shows Rhythm & Hues' Dina Benadon (c) and Ellen Coss the new *Street Hoops*. **Center**--KX Intl.'s Mike Gentry (seated) samples Air Ride Intl.'s *Cyber Motion*, as the company's Julian Were looks on. **Right**--Canobie Lake Park's David Cook (l) stops to talk about *Lucky 7's* with Skee Ball's Jeff Hudson (c) and Dennis Keeny.



Left--Amusement Product's *Super Truck* with the proud crew behind it, (l-r): Jay Grant, Charles Wood, and Bill Wilcox. **Center**--New Orleans teacher Pam Jiles escorts her Reynolds Academy pre-kindergarten class to the show as guests of Pentes Play. **Right**--Bob's Space Racer's Dylan Cook (top) calls the action as attendee's whack the mole.

At the Atari booth, players got their racing fix with *San Francisco Rush Extreme Racing*, a dedicated video featuring eight cars that race around famous sights in the Bay City area.

Bay Tek's *Air It Out* football-themed color button light-stopping novelty game was a hit, and *Willy B. Stinky* alley bowler invites players to roll nine balls to land in open toilets labeled with various point values.

Big Haul, Benchmark's latest coin drop game, combines the skill of a roll down with the feel of a coin pusher. Trucks on the playfield can hold up to 250 tokens.

Bob's Space Racers showed *Ring 'Em Up*, a cash register-themed redemption game with advanced digital technology; *Vertical Water Game* and *Vertical Roll-A-Ball*, available in both park and trailer models; *Total Eclipse*, a novelty game in a new format; *Barrel of Fun* kiddie game; and *Monkey Drop* novelty game.

The crowd around the Bromley booth looked on in amazement at the realistic looking *The Shocker*, an electric chair simulator. Customers sit in the chair, grab two handles and feel a jolt, non-fatal, of course! The *Super Stunts* coin shooting game will be available in the spring.

BWB Newark was highlighting its *Reel Skill*, a true skill stop aimed at street locations and looking for more regional distributors. BWB's Ben Stott said Brady and Betson are presently on-board. "We'd like people to look at the product and see if there is a market in their state," he added.

At the Coastal Amusements booth, attendees were treated to *Triple Jam*, a one- to four-player basketball game with three baskets (the center one moves left to right) and light and sound package; *Circus Roll*, a game that varies the traditional roll down; *Powaire Hockey*, air-cushioned table games in both full and mini sizes; and Whittaker Bros. kiddie rides, including the *Jazz Car* with a dalmatian in the front seat and the *Park Ranger* with a lion in the front seat.

Coin Concepts showed its *Ski Tiger* water action game with remote-controlled jet skis that earn tickets when striking certain targets; *Hitters Rally*, an update of a classic baseball-themed target game seen at fairs and carnivals; the *Whirlwind* four-player circular coin roll down; the *Lucky Lady* fortune telling machine in a new oak cabinet; and the *Volcano and Buzzy Bee* novelty games. The company is also refurbishing remote-controlled boat systems already in the field.

Copper Memories displayed the *3-D Penny Machine* single unit penny press in two models—one design or choice of three different designs. A variety of cabinet colors are available, also custom designs.

Copy Right Rides enticed the kids with gel-coated Sesame Street kiddie rides that combine education with fun. Featured are *Big Bird, Bert & Ernie*, and *Oscar the Grouch*. (*Cookie Monster* is coming soon.)

Denny's Electronics showed the two-player *Wacky Water* race coin-op version of the company's larger center trailer and line-up trailer units. Players shoot water at rotating splash targets as a colored solution fills the curving tubes. It can dispense coupons or tokens.

Digital Vehicles had its Pacesetter 8000 series racing simulators with 180-degree wraparound screen that immerses players in real-life driving experiences.

We've seen it before and it's still popular, Design Plus' *Pro Striker* alley bowler that uses real pins and balls, available with either a ticket dispenser or bill validator.

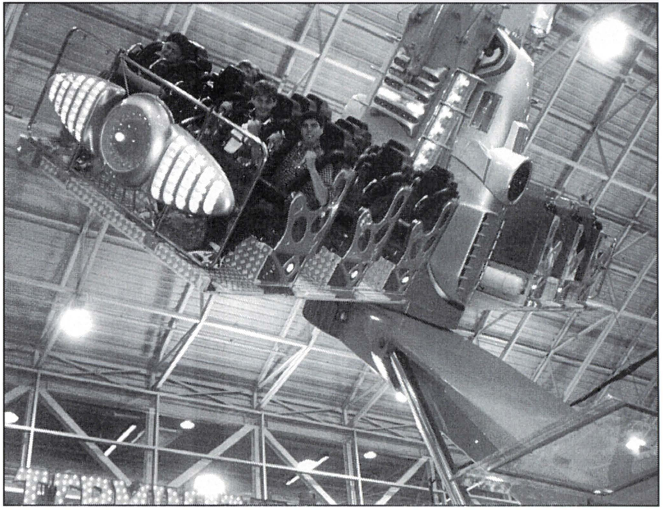
Dynamo said it was having a great show with its line of air hockey, foosball, and pool tables. "Locations are diversifying and this type of product is a great way to add attractions to locations," said a company spokesman.

Attendees loved Exidy's *Turbo Ticket* ticket blowing machine that allows two-fisted fun attempting to land as many tickets as possible, and the *Hot Shot* shooting gallery game.

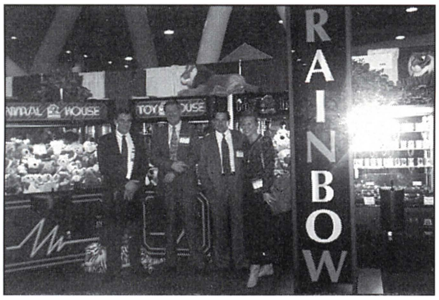
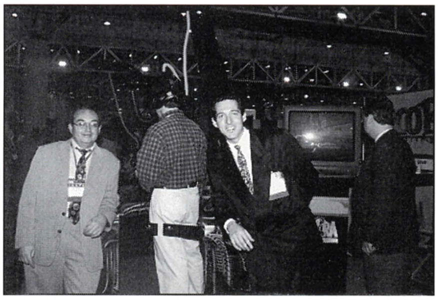
You're never too young to start practicing your putting on G.L. Technology's Putting Challenge II.

PUTTING CHALLENGE II
PUTTING CONTEST
PUTTING CHALLENGE II

Giant rides drew crowds.

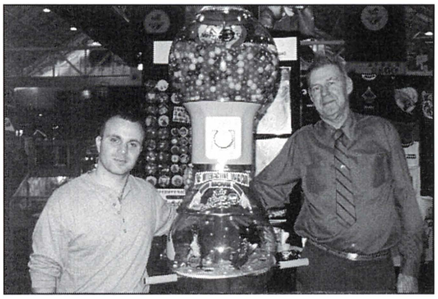


IAAPA 96

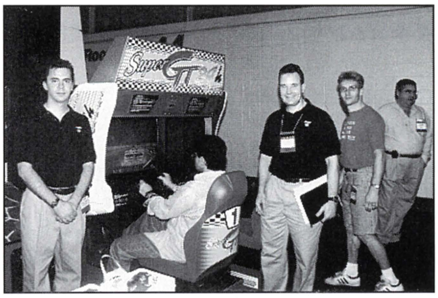



Left--Ken Cipperly (l) and Maggie Mitchell (r) of Kemac Dist. with Rainbow Crane's J.P. O' Neil (second from left) and Stann Smith. **Center--**CM-300's Sam Singal (l) and Israel Ellis generate some heat with their new Cobra VR unit. **Right--**The Q-Zar guys, (l-r): Steve Varsano, Paul Sorbello, Dave Turner, and Gary Goodman with a bevy of Q-Zar babes.

Left--Atlas Dist.'s Jerry Marcus (c) gets a jolt from the *Shocker* as Bromley's Jim Belt (l) and Martin Bromley watch. **Center--**At AAMA's booth, (l-r): Steve Ward (Fabtek), Ed Manning (Jaleco), Marcio Bonilla (Arachnid), Angela Orlando (AAMA), Don Grivetti (Valley) and Dean DeKeyser (Bay Tek). **Right--**By *Clean Sweep* cranes, (l-r): Smart's Gordon Smart, Just Kiddie Rides' Jerry Reda, and Smart's Mike Smith and Ray Meister.



Left--Carlos DeLima (representing Rowe in Brazil) and Joel Friedman (r) of Rowe show the *Venus* with CD video attachment. **Center--**From left: Rob Harshaw and Rod Allen of Heads Up Technology with Gary Mark and Gordon Dorsett, both of Forrec. **Right--**Guy Hart (l) of Magic Gumball and operator George Pond pictured with the *Magic Gyro*.



Left--David Macias of Atari narrates the competition on *San Francisco Rush*. **Center--**The Ace/Acme staff were proud to display their first place award in the Best Exhibit-Merchandise category. **Right--**Jaleco's Ed Manning (l) and Ralph Orlowski watch as players progress on the *Super GT 24*.

Left--HanaHo Games' Debbie Gonzalez shows the new large screen cabinet to Tourstic Enterprises' Adel AlpFahed (l) and Shaker S. Al-Othman. **Center--**Photo Vend's Mark Trotter (l) demonstrates the new *Polaroid Photo Booth* to United Dist.'s Nancy and Mark Blum. **Right--**From left: Acclaim/Lazer-Tron's Christine Wainwright plays *Stack-Em!* as Kelly McDonald, Brian Kelly, and Ron Carrara look on.

IAAPA 96

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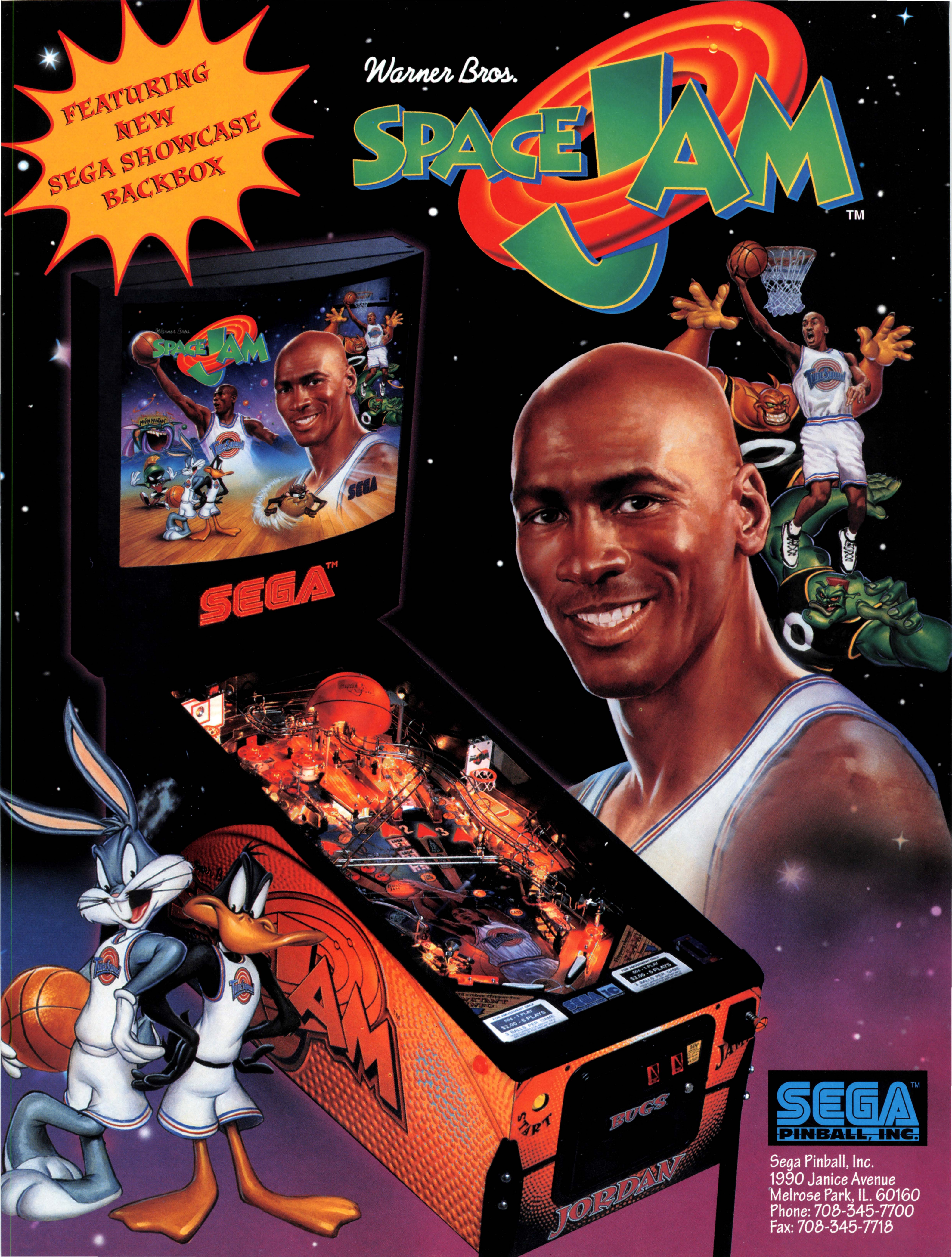
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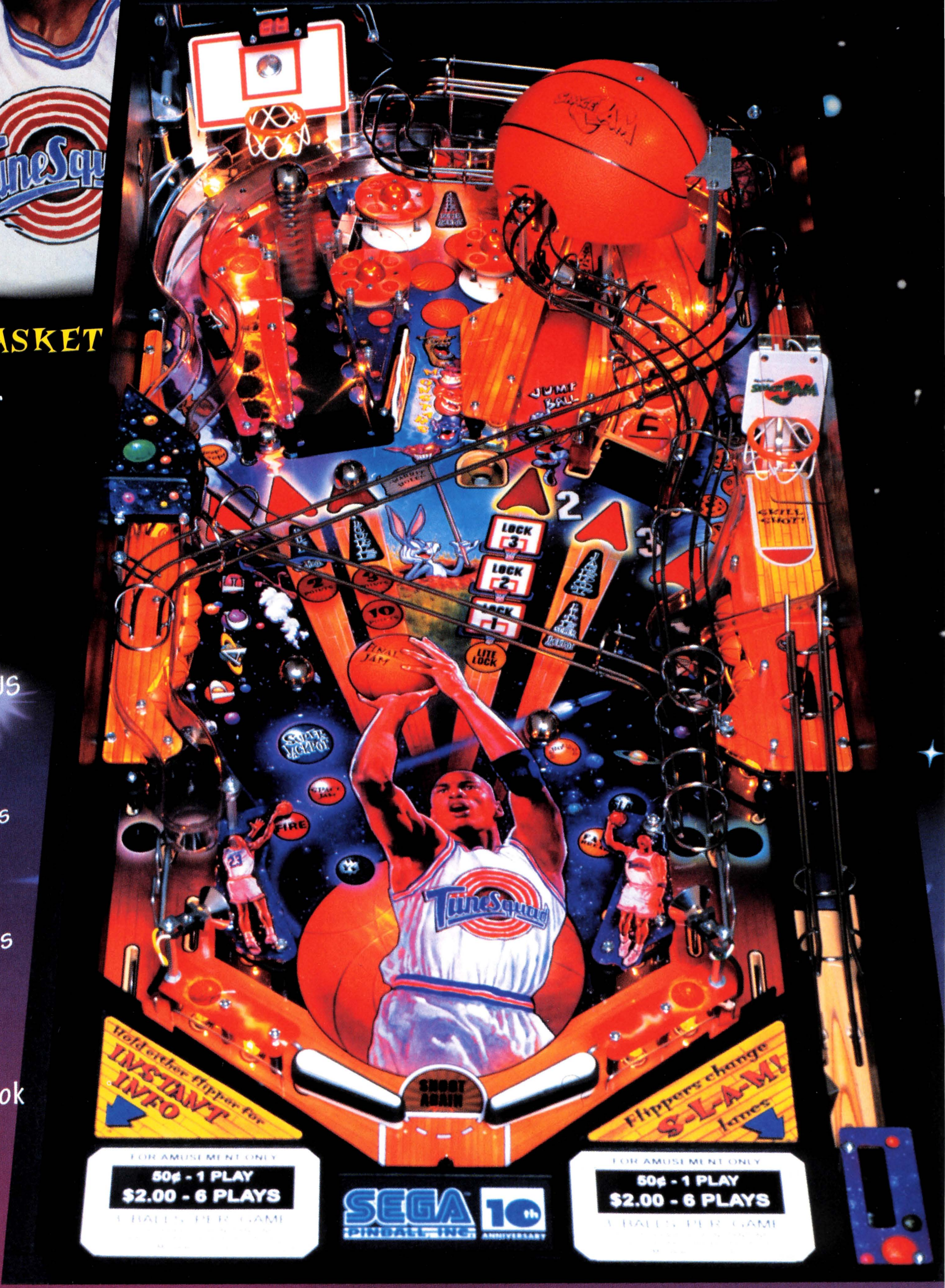
SKILL SHOT BASKET

Select an award with your flippers then plunge the ball into basket.

BASKET

Dual Scoring Systems: regular pinball scoring PLUS basketball points.

Shoot 2, 3, and special 10 point baskets to earn bonus features! Will you be the Slammaster?


LOCK 3
LOCK 2
LITE LOCK
SHOOT AGAIN
Hold either flipper for INSTANT INFO
Flippers change S-L-A-M! lanes
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$2.00 - 6 PLAYS
3 BALLS PER GAME
SEGA PINBALL, INC. 10th ANNIVERSARY

Join superstar Michael Jordan as he teams with all of his Looney Tunes pals in a game that's truly out of this world!

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Custom speech by Michael Jordan, stadium announcer Ray Clay, and many of your Looney Tunes favorites including Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Porky Pig, and Tweety!

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SPACE JAM: TM & © 1996 Warner Bros.

The smiles on these faces says it all!

Of course, video games, like Sega's Sky Target, were popular.

Eurolink offered a *Penny Presser* in one- and three-player models; also a quarter press machine.

Fun Industries' *Steer Crazy* is a steering wheel-controlled redemption game with dazzling neon decorations. The company also showed the *Pop Fly* baseball-themed prize-vending skill game and its line of *Money Machine* units.

Gametime exhibited its *Mini Maxx* electric-powered back hoe digger that can be set for redemption and can accommodate both children and adults.

G.L. Technologies has a hit with its *Putting Challenge II*, a realistic, challenging golf putting game. The company also sells a home version.

What a clever idea for kids from Great American Billiards: *Kiddie Pool*, a child's size version of the traditional table game.

Hanaho Games showed a unique 50-inch cabinet with a subwoofer system that makes any game irresistable, including Incredible Technologies' bowling game that was shown with it. The company also featured its 30-inch Showcase cabinet with Namco's *Point Blank* game; and *Ghosthunter*, a two-player video redemption game geared toward children four to 12 and family entertainment.

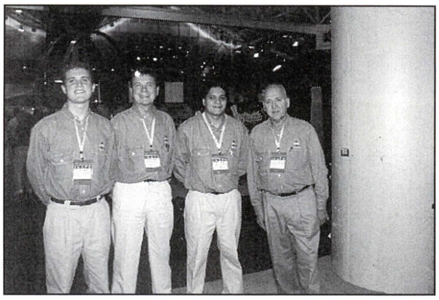
H. Betti Industries/Fun Merchants had a busy booth with the *Art-Deco Mega Crane* for one or two players highlighted by a sound and strobe light package, and the *F631 Frozen Merchandiser* for ice cream and other frozen food products. It houses a chest freezer and a robotic arm that lifts out the chosen item.

We loved ICE's *Pitcher's Duel*, the next generation of *Power Home Run Derby*, which now features, by licensing agreement, the Louisville Slugger name throughout the game and the opportunity for a second player to stand behind the batter and control a realistic Major League 3-D pitcher. Also shown were Cromptons' novelty games such as the basketball-themed *Hi-Ball*, coin pusher *Disco Fever*, and coin drop games *Shoot To Win* and *Roll A Win*. In addition, ICE has changed the colors and graphics on a number of its sports and novelty games including *Full Court Fever*, *Humpty Dumpty*, *Cobra Hunt*, and *Mini Dunx*. A prototype two-player gun game also was in the company's booth along with the *Ski Maxx* skiing simulator video.

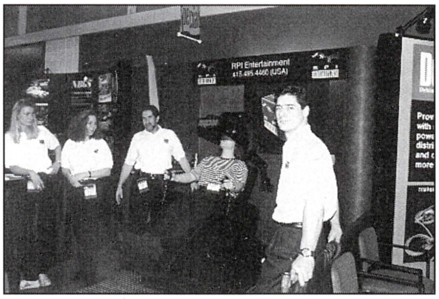
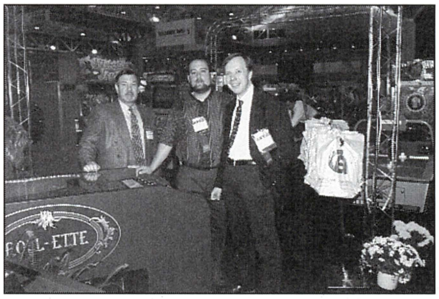
> **"Entertainment is entertainment, whether it's gigantic, white knuckle roller coasters or photo booths."**

Konami featured its *Road Rage* simulator with responsive controls, dubbed an "extreme motion simulation vehicle" (new software coming in the spring is *Solar Assault*); *Dead Eye* shooting video (dedicated only) offering players three missions, two skill levels, and a choice of eight weapons; and *Beat the Champ* tournament edition video with trackball controls and split-screens (dedicated or kit). Konami gave away eight *Beat the Champ* jackets to tournament winners during the show.

Meltec showed *Sub Patrol*, a fast moving shooting game with submarine theme; and *Big Mouth 2000*, a restyled and smaller version of the original target shooting game, *Big Mouth*.

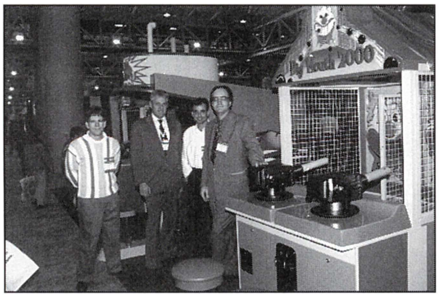
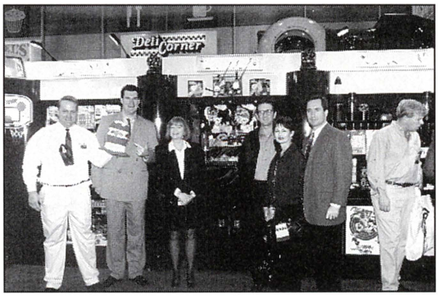


Left--Ron Stilwell of Peter Piper rides Kiddie Rides USA's *Dragster*, at left are Brian Carasik, Lola Crilly, and Stuart Heller. **Center**--The uniformed Design Plus team, (l-r): Ty Seibert, Mike Seibert, Jaime Rodriguez, and Larry Berke. **Right**--Admiring the *Cheesemobile*, (l-r): Fun Enterprise's Bill Cook and Just Kiddie Ride's Sean Kiernan and Jim Monahan.

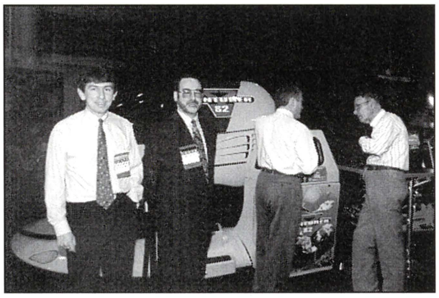



Left--Batman is big with Gekay Sales' Robert Vittitoe (l), Namco Cybertainment's Jack Rogers (c), and Laramie Interests/Play-by-Play's Stephen Chernin. **Center**--Super Sport's Diane Legendre samples IKON. From left: RPI Entertainment's Tracy Murnagh, Imke Den Hartog, Roy Gordon, and Stien Wortelboer. **Right**--Coastal Amusements' Joe Tunney explains *Roll-Ette* to Kennywood's Jeff Checcio (c) and Joseph Barron.

Left--Alter Enterprises' Earl Heller (l) and Tom O' Dell show off their *Photo Loco* combo kiddie ride/photo attraction. **Center**--At the Phoenix Games/Astro booth, (l-r): Benchmark's Stephan Renaud, Southgate's Jerry Monday, Benchmark's Al Kress, and Astro's John Nelson. **Right**--By *Alpine Racer 2*, (l-r): New Way Sales' Paul Janda, Leona Wagstaff, Namco's Tom Siemieniec, New Way's Jerry Janda, and Namco's Emilio Cabrera.

Left--Checking out *Big Mouth 2000*, (l-r): John Adams of Meltec, Jack Campbell of Campbell Inc., and Mike and John McEwan of Meltec. **Center**--From left: Oriental Trading's Paul Brinkman, Mr. Gatti's Steve Dunn, Oriental's Sondra Doyle, and Mr. Gatti's Sam and Janet Housden and Joel Longtin. **Right**--Fun Station's Rich Bartlett (l) looks at kiddie pool tables with Great American Billiards' Bobby Keelyn.



Left--Thomson Entertainment's Graham Whitehead (l) and Simon Molseed watch passengers enter the Venturer S2 motion simulator. **Center**--From left: Doron's Rick Love, B. Kelly Stevens, Ken Kittinger, Kate McCain, and Carl J. Wenzinger at the entrance to the Glacier Run show. **Right**--At the BWB Newark booth, Jean and Don Tunstall and Ben Stott display the new *Reel Skill* redemption unit for street locations.

Midway drew crowds to *Cruis'n World,* the follow up to its hit video, *Cruis'n USA*. Midway also featured *Real Monsters*, a redemption piece that "flushes" away the competition! Toilets seem to be a popular theme lately.

Namco had a crowded booth as players converged upon *Alpine Racer 2*, a conversion kit with two new courses and a view change feature, plus three characters; *Aqua Jet*, a water race simulator; *Alpine Surfer*, a ski simulator with air tricks and hidden character and secret tricks; *Tokyo Wars*, a combat-themed dedicated video (the Namco staff sported army fatigues to emphasize this game); and *Prop Cycle,* a dedicated video with an aerial obstacle course and unique pedal-power.

P & E Technologies brought *Street Hoops*, a single unit basketball-themed novelty game with a prize dispenser. The single unit is geared for street operators while the double is targeted to FECs.

Penny Pinchers, a division of Foto Fantasy, invited showgoers to "pinch your way to profits" with its pressed penny machine. Also on hand was Foto Fantasy's photo booth, now featuring color.

Rainbow Cranes highlighted its *Toy House Oak* model crane with all the quality features of the Rainbow line, including scratch-resistant safety glass and built-in meter security.

Rowe had a booth for the first time, highlighting its popcorn vending machine, perfect for many locations, and latest jukebox, *Venus*, for locations looking to add a touch of class.

Sega GameWorks, with its name illuminated across the floor and ceiling from a giant projector, could be seen from all over the floor. In the booth players enjoyed *Space Jam* pinball themed to the successful movie of the same name; *Ski Super G* deluxe simulator that delivers the thrills and spills of ski racing with 3-D graphics, revolutionary foot controller, and choice of *Alpine Ski World Cup* or *Super Giant Slalom*; *Last Bronx* two-player fighting video kit using the Model 2 CG board; *Daytona USA Special Edition* with time trial option, now in a one-player sit-down cabinet; and *Sonic Championship* video, a cartoon-style fighting game featuring Sonic the Hedgehog. The company also announced a re-issue of its popular *Cut the Cheese* and *Sega Sports* coin drop games.

"In one sense the coin-op business is contracting, in another it's expanding. Everything is getting to be big entertainment."

Seidel displayed its *Smokin' Token* and *Goin' Rollin'* redemption games, hits with FECs. The company also showed an old favorite, *Lite-A-Line* in a brand new cabinet that is more comfortable with an arm rest and eye appealing graphics. The *Hi Lo* game is also in the new cabinet that is smaller for use in more locations.

Skee-Ball is always a favorite as it has been for decades. This time players saw *Lucky 7s*, a new midway-style game, along with proven *Skee-Ball* units *Super Shot basketball* and Skee-Ball alley bowlers.

Smart Industries never lets us down when it comes to product. This time we saw the *Hollywood Photo Booth* that affords two dozen background choices, and *Oak Wood Cranes* with all the features associated with the *Clean Sweep* line (custom designs for Taco Bell and Pizza Hut were on display).

SNK had one of our favorite machines, the sticker printing machine. Customers stand in front of a video-sized cabinet and choose from among an array of backgrounds. A photo is taken and made into mini stickers. Kids will love adding these stickers to all kinds of things.

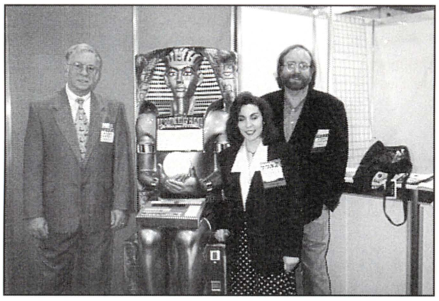
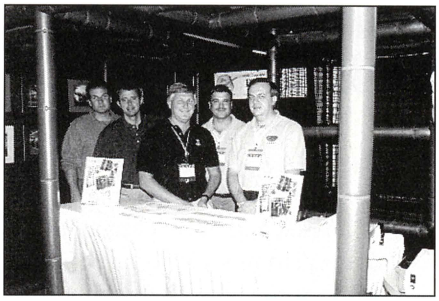
SNK also showed the *Neo Mini,* a small crane for those special locations and it can be used as a candy crane as well as with diamond-shaped capsules to add a touch of luxury to your merchandise. The *Ultra Denryu Iratra Bou* was shown, but is not available. It is based on a popular Japanese TV show. Players try to guide a baton through a maze without hitting the sides.

In addition SNK showed a fascinating new cabinet, Super Neo 29, for its Neo-Geo video game system. It has a mini screen at the top for viewing your interactive competitor.

Vendor's Alliance showed the *Dime 'N' Mine* dime-pressing souvenir unit with animation; also the original *Pressed Penny.*

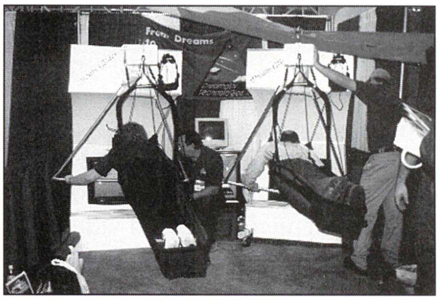
This is only a fraction of the equipment that was on hand. There were a number of photo booths and photo opportunity attractions. Attendees went home with photos of themselves in the jaws of a killer crocodile, with their face superimposed on a to-die-for body, or on the cover of a fantasy magazine.

To illustrate the scope of the exhibits, consider that there were 78 categories of exhibitors. There were water-related companies, trade associations, theatrical equipment, security, rides, printing, photographic equipment, miniature golf, interactive sports, insurance, hi-tech, gifts and novelties (over 100 of these!), games, food and beverage related companies, tents, awnings, displays, consultants, construction, computer software and systems, clothing, admission systems, and costumes. ▲

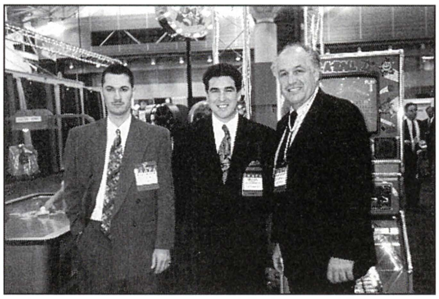



XCP INC.
Pre-Paid Debit VendaCard Systems

Left--Visiting Maria Fotinopoulos at the American Sammy booth are AMOA president Jerry Derrick (l) and Lee Wesson of Peachtree Music. **Center--**From left: Jungle Rapids' Glenn Moore, Bob Rippy, and Tony Walters confer with Playland Services' Tom Brown and Alan Gooch. **Right--**Jay Poltill listens as Darrell Rademacher of XCP explains his debit card system.



Left--Eleven-year-old Katie Kogos takes a run on Sega's *Wave Runner*. **Center--**From left: Photon's Terry Brooks, Marc Mueller, and Matt Mueller are ready to greet attendees. **Right--**Steve Hunter (c) of Dreamality Technology explains the *Dream Glider* to two interested operators.



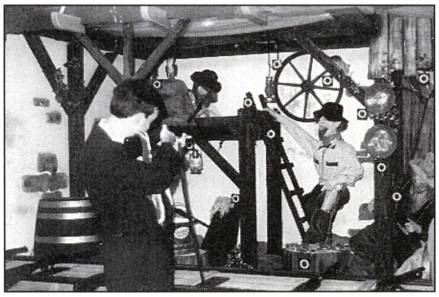
MARKEL INSURAN

Left--Brent Leisure's Gary Newman (r) visits with these Namco folks, (l-r): David Swafford, Tom Siemieniec, Frank Cosentino, and Emilio Cabrera. **Center--**Simon Deith (c) of Deith Dist. introduces us to his colleagues, Michael Gheorghiu (l) and Marvin Rostolder. **Right--**Markel Insurance's Angie Whaley is accommodating as Fuji Films' Jim McFarland asks to try one of her french fries.

ARMS
SKILO
THE NEW GROU
REDEMPTION GAM

Bullwinkle's
Franchising

Left--The ARMS/*Skilo* booth team, (l-r): Rhonda Fletcher, Lou Cappetta, Joe Soto, and Jay Boucher. **Center--**Mike Scharf of Foodnest in Costa Rica (l) is welcomed by Machine-O-Matic's Nancy Calderon and Josef Schwarzli. **Right--**ICO Investment's Alex Moradi (l) looks at the Bullwinkle's prospectus from Bullwinkle's Paul Kramer (c) and Stuart Hersh.



COWAN
COSTUMES INC.

Left--Acclaim/Lazer-Tron's Matt Kelly (l) talks with the United Kingdom's Neal Barrington. **Center--**Steve White of Play Meter takes aim at a traditional shooting gallery midway game. **Right--**Cowan Costume's Carole Wheeler (r) and Sheila Thomas show a huge toy soldier costume to Showbiz Pizza's Brian Hagan.

IAAPA '96

Laser tag finds a home at parks show

Although IAAPA is seen by many industry buyers as the premier showcase for high-cost, high-end technology such as motion simulation and virtual reality, the continually emerging laser tag business has also found a home at this amusement park extravaganza.

In fact, this year's laser tag offerings saw everything from companies boasting tremendous booths and glitzy presentations to smaller exhibits featuring a range of products including water tag and the reintroduction of industry pioneer Photon.

Among the companies introducing new products were a number of industry stalwarts including **Ascension Productions**, **Laser Storm**, and **Heads Up Technologies**. Ascension, which is located in Edmonton, Alberta Canada, previewed its newest Laser Runner arena configuration, Battle Base VII, a completely themed fixed setup that comes as a turnkey product and has been designed for outdoor operation.

The growing laser tag business has become an integral part of high-tech exhibits at the IAAPA show.

Denver, Colo.,-based Laser Storm joined forces with the Marvel Entertainment Group to introduce an X-Men themed laser tag game, which will allow players to experience the comic book characters' world including vivid 3-D graphics adorning the arena walls using the company's Fluorographic printing process.

Laser Storm CEO Robert Cooney said the company expects to open 30 corporate stores next year, and while it will do joint ventures with other operators wanting to utilize the X-Men game, Laser Storm will retain five percent of the equity in order to police the copyright. "Everything we've done is true to the license and we want to make sure that is retained in the stores," Cooney explained. "We're in transition, shifting the emphasis from selling to operating. We're being more selective about whom we sell to."

Heads Up Technologies, which is located in Carrolton, Texas, presented new and existing operators of its LaserTrek game with TrekWare, a software program using a wizard-like format and Window-style icons to assist in creating new game experiences. It allows operators to assemble new games by giving them the ability to easily change game rules and objectives while still creating viable games. In addition, TrekWare guides provide computerized automation over LaserTrek's variety of special effects, music, lights, sounds, and visual effects.

Heads Up also announced the availability of its newest game *Deep Cover*, a thriller offering play-

It's Not Too Good

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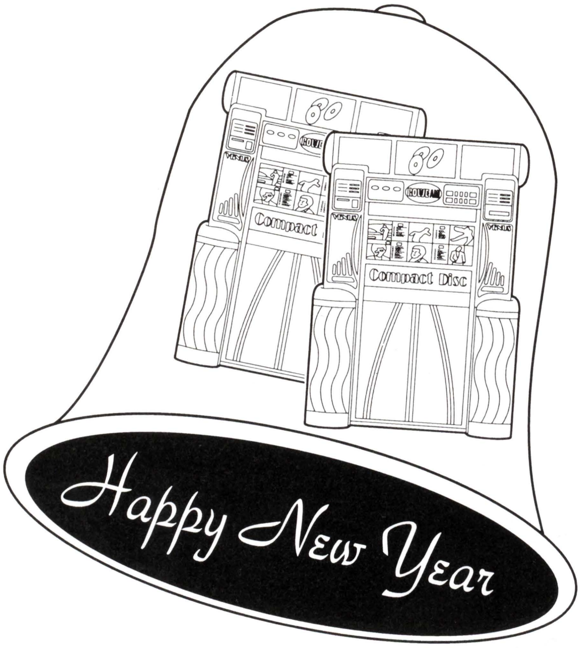

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1	CDM-12	#30995302
1	Mech. Board	#61086201
1	Power Supply Bd.	#61056501
1	CBA-2	#65093008
2	Driver Boards	#40710105
1	Amp. Acc. Kit	#26694703
1	Remote . Control	#30632201
100	Blank Title Strips	#30935904
2	Transistors (AMP)	#70030206
2	Transistors (AMP)	#70030207

Happy New Year

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ers a surprise alternation designed to maintain interest and encourage repeat play by placing a spy on each laser tag team. Heads Up president Rob Harshaw said that despite a market saturated by manufacturing companies, he sees positive things in laser tag's future.

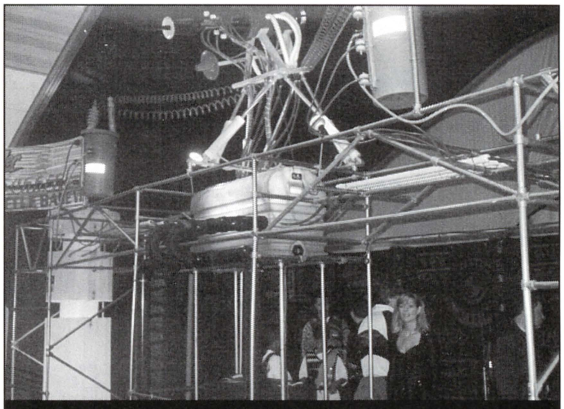
"The types of people we are seeing are much more qualified to run an attraction than last year," Harshaw said. "The operators are getting smarter. The market is maturing. People are starting to find their niche."

Other laser tag veterans on the show floor were **LaserTron**, which saw the introduction of several elements to its system last year such as new shoulder speakers, game formats, point-of-sale and reservation software, and individual sensor programming and scoring; **Q-Zar**, which was promoting its iQ system and new *Planet Q* game; and **Ultrazone**, which opened close to 30 stores during 1996 bringing its worldwide total up to 215 locations.

Beyond these larger manufacturers of laser game equipment were a plethora of medium to smaller companies showing their wares on the trade show floor. Here's a look at some of the other laser tag products IAAPA had to offer:

activity: Games Inc.: While not necessarily laser tag, Camarillo, Calif.,-based activity: Games Inc. sells several different versions of its water tag products which rely on some of the same game play elements as laser tag. As one company representative put it, "There's a lot less maintenance, and it's a lot cooler." As to the latter, he didn't specify whether he was talking about temperature or cultural status. Systems with or without inflatable arenas run anywhere from $5,000 to close to $40,000 depending upon the number of players and options.

Actual Reality: Promoting a system that sells for anywhere between $35,000 to $85,000 depending on the number of players, Actual Reality out of Edmonton, Alberta Canada, touts its operator management system as state-of-the-art in its ability to integrate with all aspects of the system as well network with other systems. The company's ProSite System can handle multiple users, membership management, equipment reservation, party booking, jacket-pack maintenance, and features a player/employee touch-button log-in, report writer, and cash control system. The company has systems on location in 36 locations worldwide, and has done some low-end arena design.

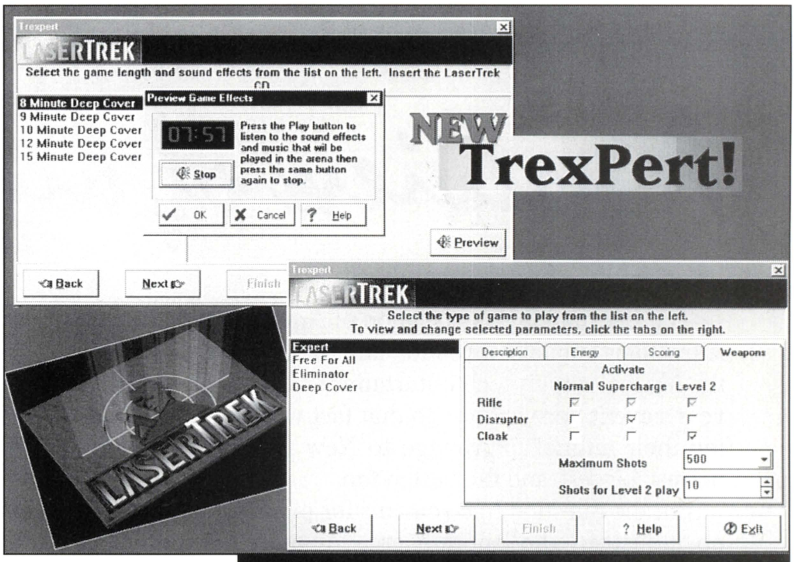


Ascension Productions unveiled its new Battle Base VII arena at the show.

Deep Forest: Features of this Emeryville, Calif., company's Laserforce system include digital speech, continuous radio link, digital sound effects, handicapping, role-playing capability, interactive targets and other special effects, a real-time lobby display, and optional touch screen computers. Systems sell for $71,000 to $127,000, plus an annual license fee of $450 per player vest which covers minor software upgrades. The company does not operate any of its 36 locations worldwide, although it may open some corporate stores in the near future.

Intersphere USA: This Des Moines, Iowa,-based company, has five systems in the United States and prides itself on providing operators with full service from start to finish; they are even consulting with an insurance provider at present. Intersphere's LaZerware systems run between $65,000 and $175,000 and include handsets, jackets, charger units, wall units, a computer and printer, score sheets, software, operational training, and a one-year limited warranty. Options include arena design, theming, and marketing training, as well as special effects and the GateMaste point of sale system.

LaserChaser: With nine systems already on location, LaserChaser out of Upland, Calif., takes an innovative approach to sales of its systems by working with operators on revenue-sharing ventures and try-before-you-buy options. The company already has five more centers in the works for its system, which sells for $2,200 per gun set. While the company doesn't operate locations or offer franchises, it is heavily involved in arena design offering turnkey arenas in portable, inflatable, tube frame, and permanent configurations.



Select the game length and sound effects from the list on the left. Insert the LaserTrek CD

8 Minute Deep Cover
9 Minute Deep Cover
10 Minute Deep Cover
12 Minute Deep Cover
15 Minute Deep Cover

Press the Play button to listen to the sound effects and music that wil be played in the arena then press the same button again to stop.

Select the type of game to play from the list on the left.
To view and change selected parameters, click the tabs on the right.

Expert
Free For All
Eliminator
Deep Cover

Activate

	Normal	Supercharge	Level 2
Rifle	☑	☑	☑
Disruptor	☐	☑	☐
Cloak	☐	☐	☑

Maximum Shots 500
Shots for Level 2 play 10

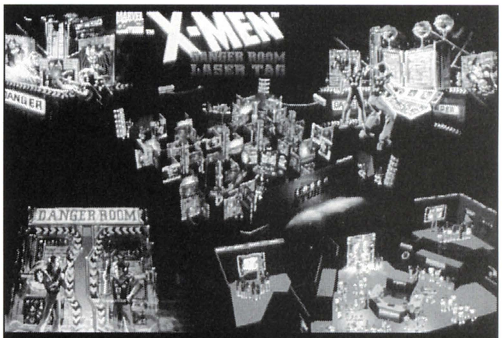
Heads Up Technology introduced a new game, *Deep Cover*, and new software to aid in creating different games, TrekWare.

Lazer Maze: With a completely portable laser tag system that can be set up and fully functional in one hour, Lazer Maze provides a product that its founder Marvin Taman couldn't find in other products, a game durable enough to take a beating and keep on shooting. Just ask Taman to demonstrate how durable his product is and watch him hurl it to the ground again and again. Systems, which cost $2,495 per pack, have been sold to eight locations, and the company operates two fixed locations and two portable units. Taman said they have also done four arena build-outs. Lazer Maze comes with nine different games and one operator-programable experience. Sales and marketing of the systems are handled by activity: Games Inc. in Camarillo, Calif.

Laser Star Technologies: With a company motto of "No vests, no headsets, no hassles," Davie, Fla.,-based Laser Star proclaims its system to be the most comfortable for players and the most maintenance-free. With no vests to wear, scoring is accomplished by registering hits to the built-in gun sensors which give a two- to three-foot target radius around the gun. The guns automatically reset themselves, and players fire their guns into the download scoring center at the end of the game to receive printed scorecards. Other features and services include arena packages, custom project engineering, soft modular play conversions, and an interactive targeting system.

Photon: The company which first introduced an early version of laser tag over a decade ago is back with an all new system. The first system will be put in place this year in a corporate store in Laurel, Md., with other sites to come. The new generation package will feature a game reservation system, digital identification and debit card system, integrated account and payroll software, automated team selection and paging system, multilevel playing field, heads-up display scoring, and a ranking computer.

VeQtor: With two years experience in the laser game business, VeQtor has equipment in 62 locations worldwide and offers a 12-gun system with packs for $28,995. The company, which has a United States distribution office in Escondido, Calif., operates three mobile units in California and six total units in England, three mobile and three permanent. VeQtor recently introduced the stand-alone gun Megabeast, which requires no vest but can be plugged into the company's vest or FlightPaQ. A 12-gun Megabeast system sells for $19,995. ▲



Laser Storm has teamed up with Marvel Comics for its X-Men themed laser tag adventure.

A preview of high tech heaven

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions annual convention and trade show has become the Mecca of high-tech entertainment offerings, and this year's event bore witness to that fact with attendees making their annual pilgrimage to New Orleans to see the newest, biggest, and the best in fun.

But the question that remains for members of the coin-op industry, who operate arcades and fun centers, is whether high-tech attractions can pay for themselves and remain profitable.

A young player tries out CM300 Corp.'s Cobra VR machine.

At a seminar titled "High Tech in FECs," a number of distinguished panelists disagreed on the answer. "I've yet to see anybody take their dog on a virtual walk or go on a virtual date," said Bob Rogers of BRC Imagination Arts.

Patrick McBride of the McBride Co. seemed to agree, saying that technology could actually be dangerous to FEC operators, who depend on pay-for-play business, when so many large retailers are beginning to offer high-tech entertainment on a free promotional basis.

However, McBride went on to say that ironically FECs must compete with this trend to remain viable in an increasingly technological marketplace. "You need service and (all the basics) but like the movies you need the blockbuster," he declared.

Concurring with that opinion was Jordan Weisman of Virtual World: "The opportunity exists to let customers have these thrills on scales that are manageable. The technology is never the answer unto itself. It's just a better hammer."

From an operator's perspective, Harold Skripsky of the Enchanted Castle said the question of high tech products is treacherous at best. "This whole subject gives me heartburn," he said. "An operator deals in reality and that's what you can afford. If the content's no good, you've got a very expensive mistake sitting there."

That sentiment also seemed to be reasonating with manufacturers on the show floor. "We're making a concerted effort to take a marketing as opposed to engineering approach to game development," said Tom Milks, director of sales in the United States for Virtuality.

"We're definitely moving in the direction of content-based stories as opposed to thrill rides," added Mark Ward, marketing manager with motion simulation producer SimEx.

Thus, operators are faced with the dilemma of trying to compete against larger entertainment players while living within a realistic budget, and the issue of return on investment brings them right back to the specific equipment currently available.

A new reality for operators

While the promise of virtual reality is longstanding in the amusement game industry, it continues to struggle with its perceived status as little more than a novelty item that cannot attract repeat business.

Many industry veterans discount the game play of VR systems from both a graphic and content or narrative viewpoint, but despite these criticisms a number of companies have continued to carve out their positions in the marketplace. Thus, while this year's IAAPA may have seen fewer virtual reality games on the show floor, those that were there had more experience to draw upon in presenting their products. Here's a look at some of those companies:

CM300 Corp.: As a former operator of other companies' VR equipment in its Cybermind retail outlets, CM300 Corp., located in Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada, introduced its Cobra unit as both a sit-down and stand-up experience built into one unit. The stand-up configuration can

Air Ride Intl.'s CyberMotion individual interactive seat incorporates patented pneumatic technology with three degrees of motion freedom.

easily be modified with an optional seat that fits inside. Cobra allows operators complete technical access to the Pentium-based PC and CM300 virtual technologies processor, and software will be introduced for the platform every three months. There are currently four titles available, with four more coming soon. The head-mounted display (HMD) hangs from a boom over the pod-style platform, connected by a cord.

Dynamic Visions: Utilizing both an HMD and gun interface for game play, the Mississauga, Ontario, Canada,-based firm has been testing its product, the Orion GameSystem, for two years in 20 locations across eight countries. Dynamic says the game is ready for sale with the introduction of five software titles and a software-controlled virtual attendant for attendant-free operations. The game can be operated as a sit-down or stand-up. Financing is available in North America.

Ferris Productions: Offering immersive audio, 3-D visuals, and even smell, the Phoenix, Ariz.,-based company's Experience System lets players take in a number of different virtual adventures. Along with its other software titles, the Experience System provides customers with what it calls V-topia in which they travel through a number of different landscapes literally taking in the sights, sounds, and smells all while relaxing on its sleek, reclining chair-style platform and peering into its lightweight headset. The system is priced at approximately $16,000.

Immersive Technologies: A newcomer to the VR market, Immersive Technologies in Richardson, Texas, debuted its Kimera system, touting the game's potential as an unattended coin-op virtual reality experience. The game is played using a head-mounted boom display that allows for six degrees of freedom and built-in quad sound adding to the 3-D experience. Kimera features two current software

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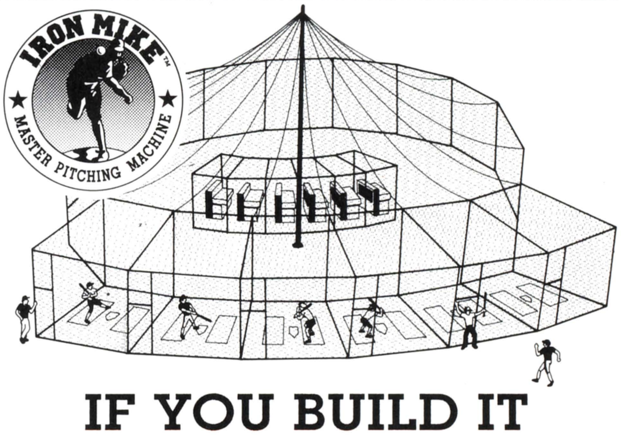

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titles, a compact footprint, a 20-inch color monitor for onlookers, and direct coupling of controls.

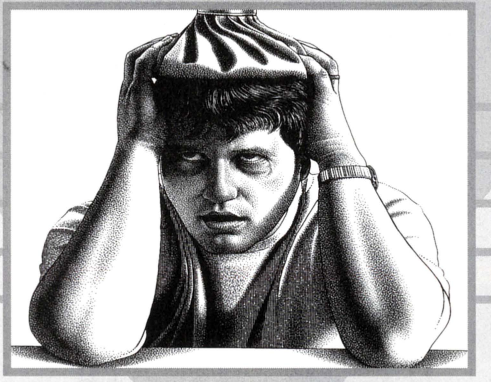
Virtuality: *VR Pac-Man* is the newest offering from the VR veterans at Virtuality, which has its United States sales office in Irving, Texas. The game, which was licensed to the British-based firm by Namco, retains much of the original game play, while adding a never-before-seen new level. Virtuality has enhanced the classic game for its Series 2000 SU by networking up to four players. This enables them to see, talk, and compete with each other in the same virtual maze while still trying to outwit the ghosts. Virtuality is planning to add a number of new features to its Series 2000, including operator-friendly functions such as tracking of game plays and other auditing functions. The company is currently in the process of developing a distributor network in the United States.

Virtual Images/Virtual Systems: These two VR companies formed an alliance last year to offer a comprehensive line of entertainment systems and were on the show floor with their respective products. Virtual Images, located in Dublin, Ohio, produces the stand-up Cyberpak, a one player unit that puts players inside a jetpack and lets them interact in a 360 degree-rotational environment via a variety of HMDs. Its modular design and light weight simplifies the set-up and teardown, making it easily transportable. Westlake, Ohio,-based Virtual Systems manufactures a pod-style stand-up unit, the Avenger, which sells for just under $15,000. The company also produces an Instruction Station which produces an increase in customer through-put by minimizing in-pod training time.

The Vivid Group: In addition to its existing unencumbered Mandala unit, the Toronto, Ontario, Canada,-based firm introduced a new VR race car simulator, Big Head Racer, which takes the players live, interactive video image and places it in the racing game. The games can be linked so players also see each other's video image on the game monitor. Big Head Racer uses Vivid's patented video gesture control technology to let players steer their vehicles (on which their faces appear) with their heads by measuring how much they lean in a particular direction.

Making a move into motion simulation

Like virtual reality, motion simulation is no newcomer to the entertainment industry with industry pioneer **Doron** celebrating its 20th anniversary this year at IAAPA. However, the adaptation of this military technology



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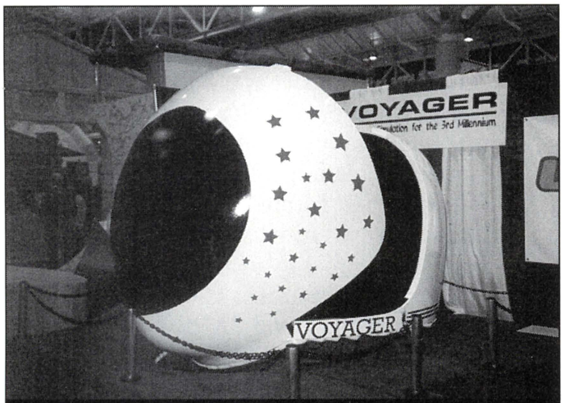
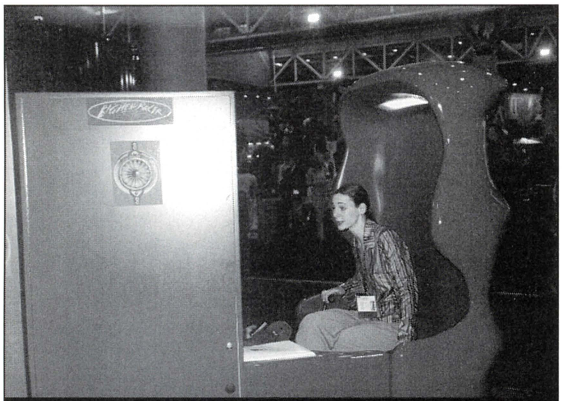
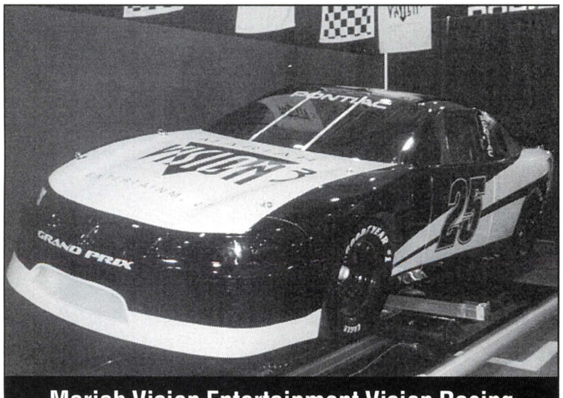


U.K.-based Leisure Dynamics introduced its Voyager two-player electric motion simulator.



The Vivid Group's Big Head Racer lets players control the game through their own head movements.



Mariah Vision Entertainment Vision Racing utilizes an actual Pontiac Grand Prix body to reproduce the experience of a car race.

to the entertainment industry has evolved slowly with companies branching out in two directions.

A number of companies on the show floor such as **Doron, Iwerks, Showscan Entertainment**, and **SimEx** were demonstrating motion simulation video and hardware aimed at large-scale, high-traffic locations like regional and national theme parks. Lack of through-put and the cost of updating such rides make them unfeasible for most FEC locations in this country.

However, a number of companies have developed smaller scale motion simulation experiences that could serve as a show stopper in facilities targeting a more local audience. The following is a glance at some of those products:

Air Ride Intl.: This British-based company's CyberMotion individual interactive seat incorporates the patented Flexator pneumatic technology with three degrees of motion freedom and up to 18 degrees of fast responsive movement controlled by the player's joystick. CyberMotion uses a high-resolution, non-reflective liquid crystal flat screen display integrally mounted into the body work of the seat and powerful directional speakers, both of which aid in immersing the player. Driven by a Pentium engine with CD-ROM drive, up to eight seats can be linked. The seat can be operated without an attendant, and several new titles are scheduled for release early this year. The unit sells for $27,500.

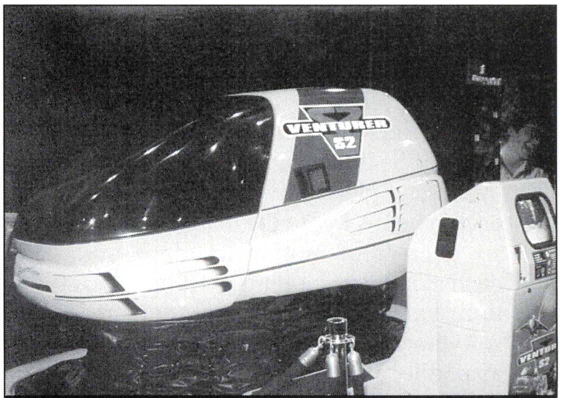
Adventure Quest: With three years of product marketing under its belt, the Fargo, N.D.,-based company has put 56 of its M-4 Personal Motion Theatres on location, including one in every Dave & Buster's. The unit is priced at $75,000, not including titles, and features 360 degrees of rotation, electric motion simulation, two-passenger capacity, and laser disc audio. At the show, Adventure Quest debuted Stratus, a one-person simulator with many of the same features. However, it also features faster speed and roll rates. The Stratus price tag is $60,000.

Falconer: New to motion simulation, Santa Monica, Calif.,-based Fal-

MaxFlight
VR 2000

Max Flight's VR 2000 individual simulators can be linked together for interactive flight competition.

Tom Milks of Virtuality (c) talks to Laser Storm CEO Robert Cooney while a show attendee tests out Virtuality's new *Pac-Man VR*.



Thomson Entertainment sold more than 100 of its Venturer S2 units last year.

coner introduced its MFX 2000. With a distinctive exterior shape and plush bucket seats inside, the MFX 2000 provides riders with more comfort. Audio visuals in the simulator were produced through consultation with Lucasfilm and with products from Panasonic and Sigma Design. MFX 2000 seats four people, utilizes electric motion simulation, and offers six degrees of motion freedom. Falconer has a library of over 20 films including originals such as Survival 2006, Jewel of the Amazon, and Bay Blaster.

Fortress Systems: Handling 12 passengers, the Explorer-12 combines the technology of motion simulation with the attraction of 3-D visuals rendered through individual 3-D glasses for each rider. The San Jose, Calif.,-based company boasts 98 films or software titles for the Explorer-12, which uses a hydraulic motion base, fully themed fiberglass shell body, double scan high-resolution projecting system, and surround sound audio system with four speakers. Options include an entry counter, portable trailer, air conditioning, and pre-show robot.

Future Entertainment Technologies: Based in Germany, Future Entertainment demonstrated its Motion Rider 3-D Interactive Simulator which can accommodate four or six riders with 52-inch and 72-inch screens respectively. The company also sells a wide range of motion platforms. The Motion Rider offers an interactive experience and can be linked as part of a network in which riders play with or against each other. A hydraulic platform offers six degrees of motion freedom, and each simulator contains a 19-inch motion control cabinet, computer, and software. Four films are currently available, and four are in production. Future Entertainment Technologies has a sales and marketing office in San Rafael, Calif.

Jessler Enterprises: The SIM245 single seat motion platform utilizes an electric base that offers two degrees of freedom, 45-degree pitch and roll, and the experience of G forces. Stereo sound headphone speakers and a stereoscopic HMD provide audio and visual images that immerse the player into the game, which is network-ready. The Peterborough, Ontario, Canada,-based company touts the game's lightweight construction and small footprint as further selling points. The unit can also be connected to a large screen monitor that is not linkable.

Kramer Intl.: Based in Grand Rapids, Mich., Kramer's attractions combine an open motion simulation platform with visuals delivered through individual 3-D, high-resolution HMDs. At IAAPA, Kramer demonstrated two of its simulation products. The first, The Illusion 'N' Fusion, uses a hydraulic base, is totally portable, accommodates 12 passengers, and runs on standard 110V power. The smaller Transcender is a four-seat open simulator also using a hydraulic platform with many of the same features. Multiple ride experiences are available for both products.

Konami: Known for its expertise in producing popular video games, the Buffalo Grove, Ill.,-based company introduced *Road Rage*, a two-seater interactive motion simulator in which one player drives and the other shoots oncoming enemies. It is based on a proprietary platform, features CG texture mapped graphics, utilizes pneumatic motion simulation, offers six degrees of freedom, and rotates 360 degrees in multiple revolutions. There are currently two games available.

Leisure Dynamics: The two-seater Voyager introduced by the British manufacturer seats two people—one driver and one shooter—and can be linked to as many as seven other units for interactive play between pods. The game premiered at IAAPA, *Wipeout*, has up to 24 different versions and will gain exposure through its introduction on the Sony PlayStation. Leisure says the electric motion base means less maintenance and lower operating expenses. The unit has a 33-inch monitor, is ready to plug in and play, and sells for $25,000 including installation.

Mariah Vision Entertainment: With an actual Pontiac Grand Prix

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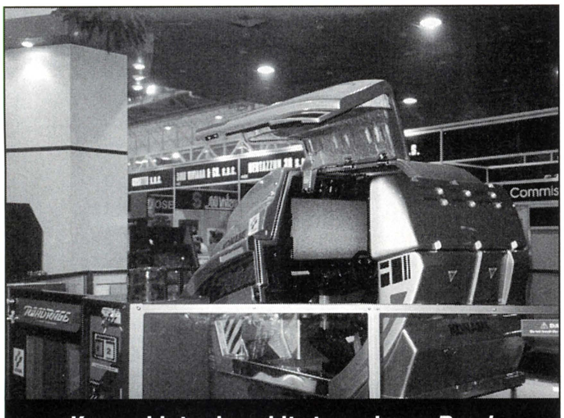

Konami introduced its two-player *Road Rage* motion simulator at IAAPA '96.

body, Mariah Entertainment out of Pittsfield, Mass., drew interest on the show floor with its *Vision Racing* attraction. Players climb into the full-size car, which is wired for realistic sound, equipped with feedback steering and pedals, and mounted on a pneumatic motion base. Other features include networked play for up to four cars, surround sound, and automatic debit card operation. Players experience acceleration and latitudinal G forces as the windshield displays live racing footage that reacts to their every move. The unit sells for $67,500 with a revenue sharing agreement of 70/30 operator to manufacturer split until the unit is paid for, then reverting to 60/40.

Mariah also demonstrated its new *NHL Full Impact Hockey*, which is being distributed by Mondial Distributing in Springfield, N.J. The game puts players in the role of goalie during a simulated hockey game, actually launching a ball in their direction as a result of on-screen action. This free-standing unit features a simulated ice surface, score-board with game statistics, multiple levels of play, and a card swipe system for operation. The game sells for $67,500 with a revenue sharing agreement of 65/35 operator to manufacturer split until the unit is paid for, then reverting to 60/40. Mariah says the units are being sold at close to cost, and revenue sharing is necessary to handle the royalties.

Max Flight Corp.: Having premiered a prototype of its interactive flight simulator at IAAPA '95, the Bayville, N.J., company was back in 1996 with production units of the Max VR 2000. Players can fly through a ring system after training against the simulator on a stand-up video. There is also an air race mode in which players can shoot each other to be the first to get the ring score. Geographically separated centers can be networked over phone lines, allowing for regional and national competitions. The simulator allows 360-degree rolls and loops, as well as vertical climbs and dives. It sells for $85,000 per single-player unit. Max Flight also introduced its Max VR 2002, which has been in development for two years, and features a virtual roller coaster ride for two players. Operators can create their own rides by selecting track pieces with different loops and rolls. Riders see the experience on a 48-inch diagonal projection screen inside the cockpit and hear the simulated screams of other riders. Max Flight is selling the system for $115,000 and hopes to produce 100 units this year.

McFadden Systems: The 12-person VR Express simulator comes complete with access stairs, loading platform, drawbridge, automatic door, and air conditioner. With a wide range of titles available, the Santa Fe Springs, Calif.,-based company provides riders with wide screen video, full-spectrum sound, and sub-woofer audio enhancement. VR Express allows for six degrees of freedom, using a Pentium-based controller with instant ride selection, and is driven by a hydraulic motion base. Options include a transportable base, trailer mount, and through loading.

Multi-Dimensional Studios: The MDS 3D EFX Thunder Theatre produced by the Salt Lake City, Utah, company has been installed in close to 20 locations since its introduction at IAAPA '95. Each theater incorporates many or all of the special effects manufactured by the company, including air jets, leg ticklers, aromas, fog, wind, and even rain or mist. The theater uses pneumatic motion seats and can accommodate between eight and 64 customers. A 16-seat theater sells for approximately $125,000 with all eight films currently available. No royalty fees are required.

RPI Entertainment: Utilizing a boom-mounted sensory helmet, San Francisco, Calif.,-based RPI debuted its single-seat arcade simulator, Ikon, which synchronizes VR images, motion simulation, and stereo sound. Best of all, according to the company, the system supports porting of all Windows 95 games as well as VR experiences. The unit can be coin-operated, offers a four-degree field of view, uses electric motion on a proprietary gravity-centered base, can be themed for any environment, and is networkable. The Ikon sells for $45,000, including one interactive title and two passive rides. The company is working on new games, including five more interactive titles.

Servos and Simulation Inc.: With a Pentium-based image generator and an electric motion base that provides 15 degrees of roll and pitch, the Altamonte Springs, Fla.,-based manufacturer can put players in pursuit of ground and air targets in its Gunship Helicopter Motion Ride. Servos, which builds a wide range of simulation products for different applications, sells its ride for $35,000, including the PC and large screen monitor placed in front of the motion platform. The motion platform and software sell for $25,000.

Thomson Entertainment: The U.K.-based simulation company continues to move forward, not only with its high-end simulators but also with its Venturer S2 unit. Thomson sold over 100 S2s last year, which also saw the release of the third ride disc containing a mixture of computer-generated and live action rides.

Virtogo: The C.A.B. Cyber Air Base, produced by the British firm, comes in two different formats, a one-player interactive and a two-player passive game. Each utilizes an open pneumatic motion base linked to a large screen monitor and is activated by a PC hardware-free control from the VHS, laser disc, or other broadcast source providing the video images. ▲

HIGH TECH AT A GLANCE

For operators contemplating the purchase of a high tech entertainment attraction, here's a list of companies discussed as part of our IAAPA '96 coverage and how to reach them. Check out our Web site (playmeter.com) for these numbers, as well as more information on high tech products.

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Ascension Productions: (403)496-9058; fax (403)496-9059
Deep Forest: (510)547-5876; fax (510)654-3444
Heads Up Technologies: (972)407-1131; fax (972)407-1758
Intersphere USA: (515)255-4944; fax (515)279-7434
Laser Chaser: (909)946-2953; fax (909)985-8983
Laser Star Technologies: (954)981-1208; fax (954)583-1762
Laser Storm: (303)751-8545; fax (303)751-8546
LaserTron: (716)836-0670; fax (716)836-0535
Lazer Maze: (805)383-0729; fax (805)383-0721
Photon: (800)325-9732
Q-Zar: (214)740-0000; fax (214)740-0011
Ultrazone: (702)734-3617; fax (702)734-3618
VeQtor: (619)747-0840; fax (619)747-7993

VIRTUAL REALITY

CM300: (905)707-3441; fax (905)707-9297
Dynamic Visions: (905)673-6569; fax (905)673-1775
Ferris Productions: (602)470-1177; fax (602)470-1166
Immersive Technologies: (972)699-9122; fax (972)699-8003
Virtuality: (214)556-1800; fax (214)556-1890
Virtual Images: (614)799-1100; fax (614)799-1177
Virtual Systems: (216)892-4874; fax (216)871-2762
Vivid Group: (416)340-9290; fax (416)348-9809

MOTION SIMULATION

AirRide Intl.; 44 (0)1293 519192; fax 44 (0)1293 519193
Adventure Quest: (701)277-1332; fax (701)277-0358
Falconer Entertainment: (310)264-7875; fax (310)264-7950
Fortress Systems: (408)487-3288; fax (408)487-3268
Future Entertainment Technologies: (415)507-1835; fax (415)507-0502
Jessler Enterprises: (705)876-0226; fax (705)876-1363
Kramer Intl.: (616)791-0095; fax (616)791-0095
Leisure Dynamics: 44 (0)1443 238588; fax 44 (0)1443 238568
Mariah Vision Entertainment: (413)448-2456; fax (413)448-7318
Max Flight: (908)240-6200; fax (908)240-4625
McFadden Systems: (310)948-4414; fax (310)948-1291
Multi-Dimensional Studios: (801)530-0185; fax (801)530-0187
RPI Entertainment: (415)495-4460; fax (415)512-1131
Servos and Simulation: (407)862-2158; fax (407)862-2166
Thomson Entertainment: 44 (0)1293 563313; fax 44 (0)1293 563388
Virtogo: (312)281-6435; fax (312)281-1567

PLAY METER Magazine
VOLUME 23, No. 1 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT/FEC INDUSTRY JANUARY 1997

Annual Report:
State of the Industry

1996 INDUSTRY VITAL STATISTICS

Industry gross annual income:	$8 billion
Number of locations	
Arcades:	12,000
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FECs:	2,700
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PLAY METER MAGAZINE
State of the Industry Report
January 1996-December 1996

PLAY METER Magazine

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January 1, 1997

Dear Readers,

The operators who took their valuable time to complete the four-page State of the Industry Survey are the heroes in this report. We received surveys from a variety of operators, ranging from those who operate thousands of games to ones whose routes consist of less than 100.

It takes this diverse operator population to get a broad picture of how the coin machine industry is faring. We know that as you ponder the results, you may feel you're doing much better or worse than the average; many are feeling that way. It's OK, we're talking averages here.

To better understand the information, I'd like to explain how we compile the results of our report. We take each completed survey and manually post the answer. Then the totals are tabulated to get an average number. After we have an average, we multiply it out by the total operator population to get the expanded numbers.

Those expanded numbers are based on the total operator population, which we have reduced to 4,000 this year. The operator population has remained fairly constant at 4,500 the past few years, but this year it was reduced based on several sources.

As with any type of survey and report, there is a certain margin for error and we expect that here. For instance, when asked how many new games were purchased, some operators included the used ones they bought. That in itself creates a higher number than you would expect.

Play Meter has been compiling survey results since the '70s, and we feel confident that our numbers are as accurate as possible. We've included some of the older numbers so you can see the changes within some of the categories. For instance, it is interesting to see that the average weekly gross on video games peaked in 1981 at $140. How we wish they were consistently making that now!

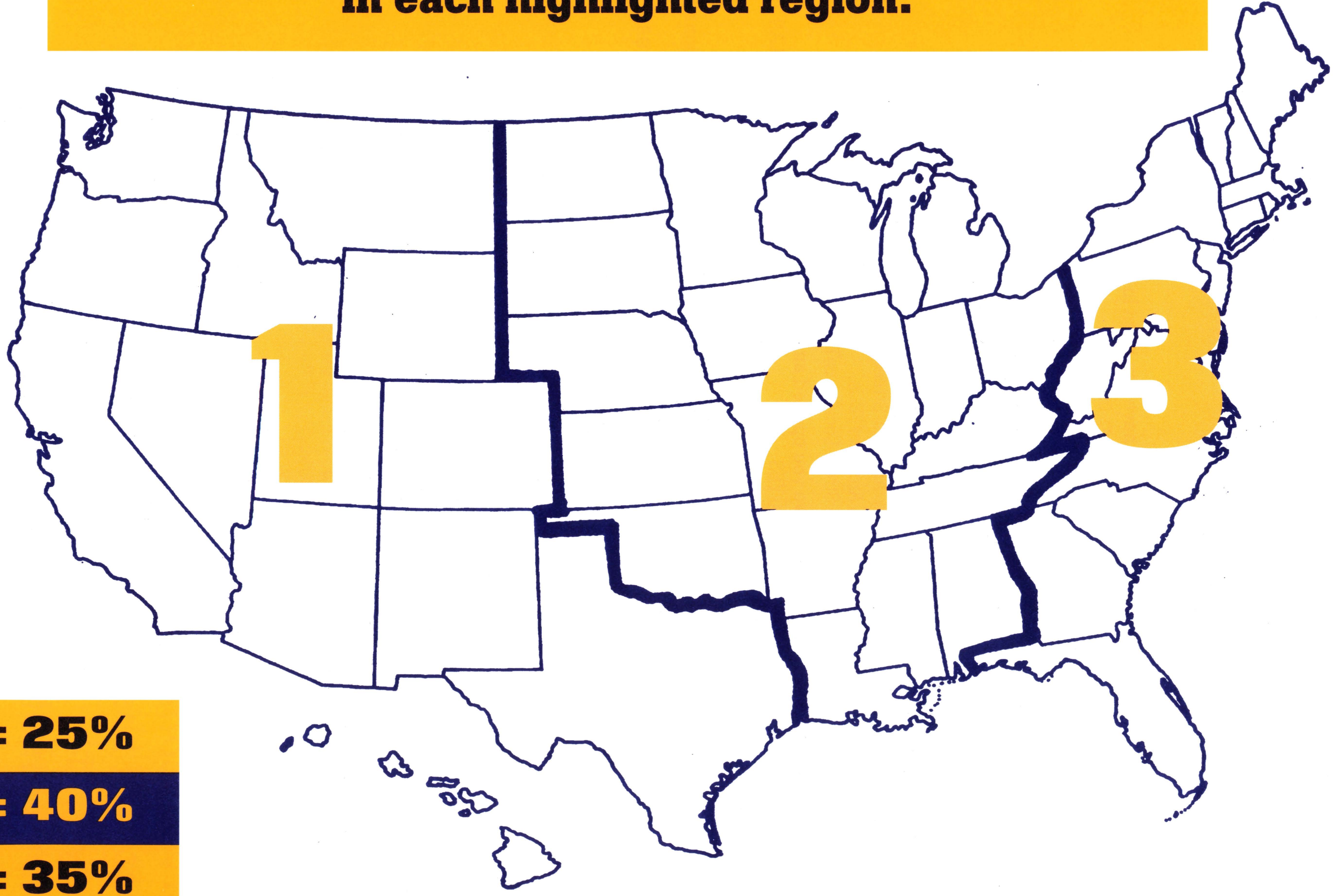
We hope that you will enjoy reading this report and will save it for reference throughout the year. We feel compelled to mention that this report is written for the industry and discourage outsiders from using it in a negative way.

If you have any questions or comments, please let us hear from you. We use those comments to improve our survey for the following year. Thanks, again, to those who gave us their undivided attention for four pages of intense survey questions. We couldn't have done it without you.

Valerie Cognevich

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

The percentage of respondents operating in each highlighted region.



1 = 25%
2 = 40%
3 = 35%

General Business

1. **How long have you been in the coin-op business?**
   32% 10 years or less
   24% between 10 and 20 years
   44% 20 years and over
   Average: 22 years (last year the average was 20 years)

2. **What type of locations do you operate?**
   5% Arcades Only
   36% Street Locations Only
   3% FECs Only
   23% Arcades/Street Locations
   24% Arcades/Street Locations/FECs
   7% Arcades/FECs
   1% Street Locations/FECs

3. **Have you opened an FEC in the past year?**
   17% YES 83% NO 11% PLAN TO

4. **Have other FECs opened in your area?**
   41% YES 59% NO

5. **Are you concerned about manufacturer-owned locations cutting into your business?**

1996		**1995**	
62% YES	38% NO	62% YES	38% NO

6. **How many locations?**

	1996	**1995**	**1994**
Arcades:	12,000	15,400	13,725
Street Locations:	273,000	382,000	292,500
FECs:	2,700	3,800	2,700

7. **Do you use location agreements?**

	1996	**1995**
YES:	68%	67%
NO:	32%	33%

8. **What is your share of the commission split?**

GAMES	**1996**	**1995**	**1994**
Over 50%:	22%	21%	18%
Under 50%:	1%	4%	1%
50/50 split:	77%	77%	82%
MUSIC			
Over 50%:	26%		
Under 50%:	4%		
50/50:	70%		

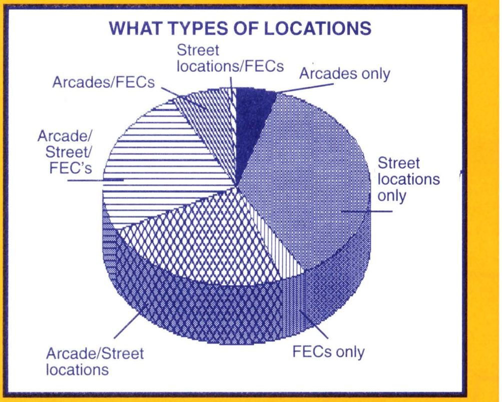
9. **Do you use a computer?**

	1996	**1995**	**1994**
YES:	78%	75%	77%
NO:	9%	12%	11%
Plan To:	13%	13%	12%

(10 years ago in 1986 only 43% of the operators reported using computers)

10. **Do you use the Internet?**

	1996	**1995**
YES:	33%	18%
NO:	67%	82%

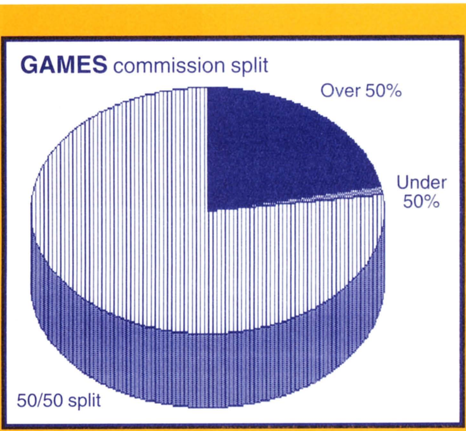


operator comments

> “Bring on the tournament games.”

> “We need a universal platform. I like the Microsoft proposal.”

> “The industry is very competitive these days with many small operators dropping out.”



11. Has your competition increased, decreased, stayed the same?

	1996	1995
Increased:	29%	33%
Decreased:	16%	18%
Stayed same:	55%	49%

12. How has the local economy been in the past year?

	1996	1995	1994
Better:	21%	21%	22%
Worse:	34%	37%	46%
Same:	45%	42%	32%

13. How has your business been in the past year?

Better: 32%
Worse: 40%
Same: 29%

14. What associations are you a member of?

AMOA: 53%
STATE: 42%
IAFEC: 7%

15. Would you be in favor of a Master License Fee in lieu of separate fees on each machine?

YES: 67%   NO: 33%

16. Which legislators do you know?

State Rep: 44%
Senator: 41%
Councilman: 43%
NONE: 38%

17. Do you think we'll see dollar coin legislation pass?

	1996	1995	1994
YES:	51%	49%	42%
NO:	49%	51%	58%

18. Did you contact your congressman in support of dollar coin legislation?

	1996	1995
YES:	35%	29%
NO:	65%	71%

19. Are you familiar with NANI?

	1996	1995
YES:	59%	41%
NO:	41%	59%

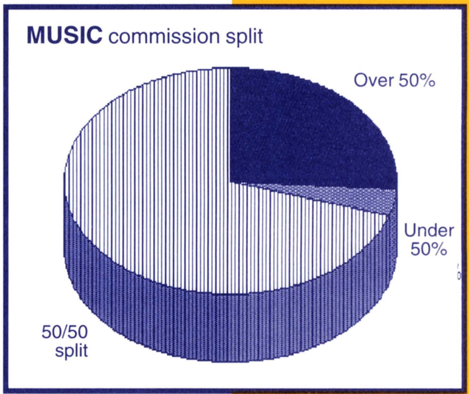
20. Do you think a network system will have a place in the industry's future?

YES: 79%
NO: 18%
Undecided: 3%

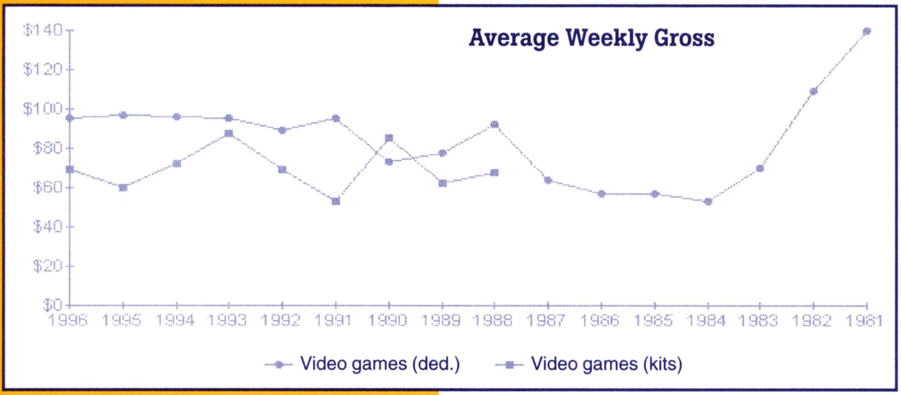
operator comments

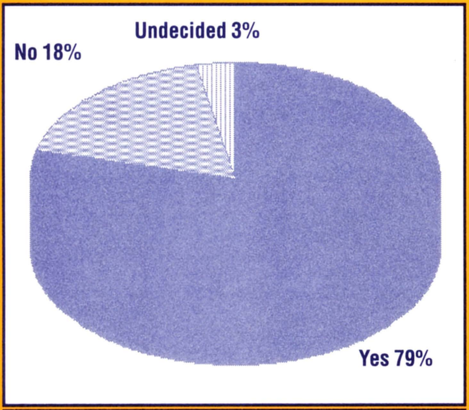
"Any arcade or FEC can work well in the right location with positive input."

"The industry is oversaturated. I see a shakeout on the horizon."



Video Games





Will a network system have a place in the industry's future?

operator comments

> "We feel most video game manufacturers have forgotten street vendors."

> "I would like to see some manufacturers revive some of the classics with today's technology."

Dedicated Video Games

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$95	$97	$96
Average # Per Operator:	120	109	185
Total # On Location:	470,000	500,000	765,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$2.3 Billion	$2.5 Billion	$3 Billion
Total New Purchases:	34,000	37,000	*

98% operate videos

Average life-span: 2-1/2 years

48% would buy more with creative financing (last year: 53%)

49% worried that the government will intervene with its own rating system

53% have a surplus of video cabinets

42% plan to look beyond coin-op for game software

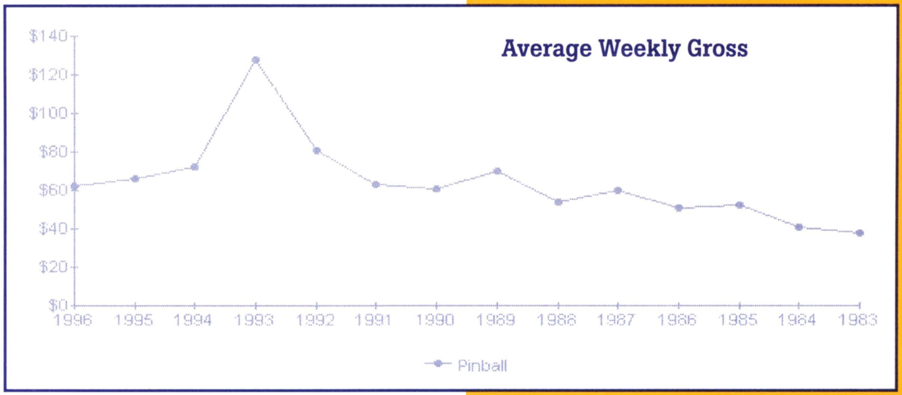
Kits

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$69	$60	$72
Average # Per Operator:	101	90	121
Total # On Location:	365,000	385,000	500,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$1.3 Billion	$1.2 Billion	$1.2 Billion
Total New Purchases:	45,000	45,000	*

AVERAGE WEEKLY GROSS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS

Year	Dedicated	Kit
1993	$95	$88
1992	89	69
1991	95	53
1990	73	85
1989	78	62
1988	92	68
1987	64	*
1986	57	*
1985	57	*
1984	53	*
1983	70	*
1982	109	*
1981	140	*

Pinballs



Pinballs

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$62	$66	$72
Average # Per Operator:	45	40	47
Total # On Location:	163,000	160,000	195,000
Annual Gross Revenue:	$525 million	$546 million	$728 million
Total New Purchases:	15,000	24,000	28,000

91% operate pinballs

Average life-span: 5 years

62% paid between $3,000 and $3,500 for their new pins
33% paid under $3,000
5% paid over $3,500

63% said they are charging more than 25 cents per play on all of their pins;
72% said they are charging more than 25 cents on some of their pins

AVERAGE WEEKLY GROSS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS

1993	$128
1992	81
1991	63
1990	61
1989	70
1988	54
1987	60
1986	51
1985	52
1984	41
1983	38

How much do you charge per play?

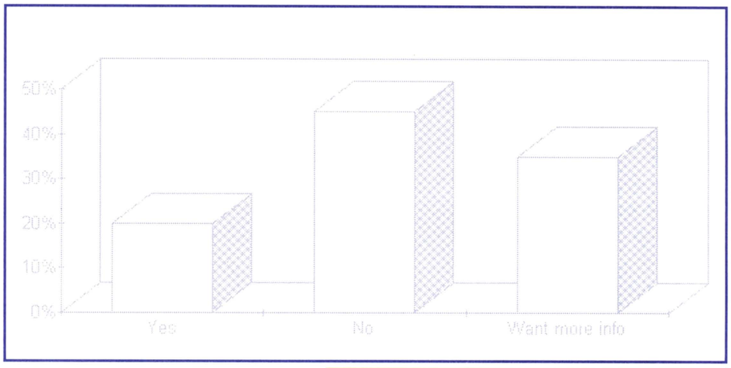
More than 25¢ on all pins	**63%**
More than 25¢ on some pins	**72%**

operator comments

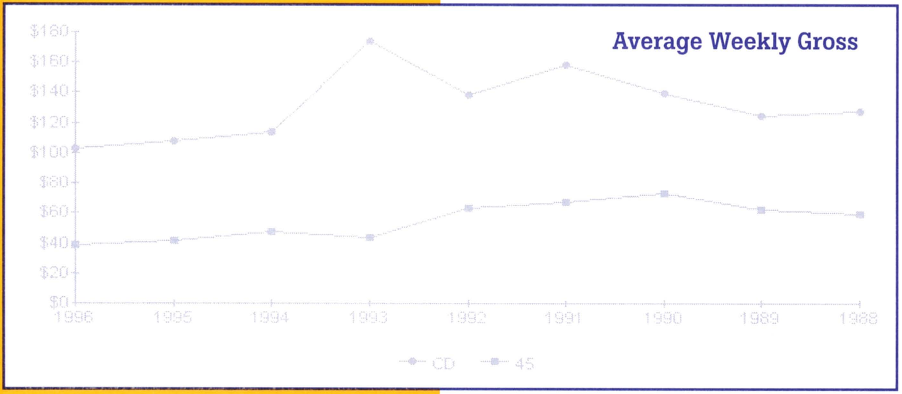
“They (pinballs) seem to earn as well as ever.”

“I grew up playing pinball so I keep quite a few.”

Jukeboxes



Are you taking a serious look at digitally downloaded music?



operator comments

> “We aren’t keeping up with the times with music.”

> “Music makes money! We buy new CDs regularly. Jukeboxes have legs.”

CD Jukeboxes

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$103	$108	$114
Average # Per Operator:	45	46	41
Total # On Location:	119,000	130,000	120,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$640 Million	$730 Million	$710 Million
Total New Purchases:	10,000	17,000	27,000

65% operate jukeboxes

20% are looking seriously at digitally downloaded music; 45% said they are not; and 35% said that they want to know more about it

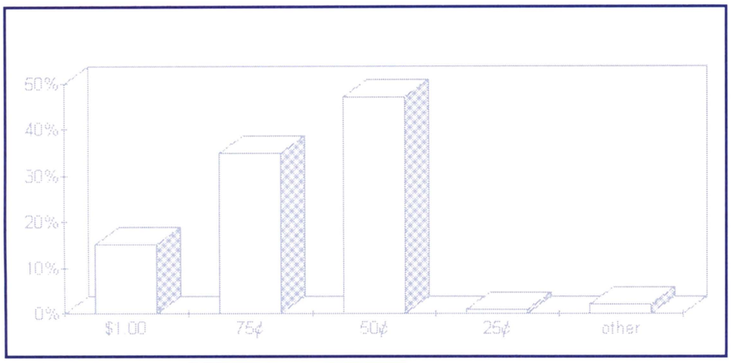
45 Jukeboxes

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$39	$42	$47
Average # Per Operator:	19	23	33
Total # On Location:	49,000	53,000	96,500
Total Annual Revenue:	$99 Million	$115.7 Million	$235 Million

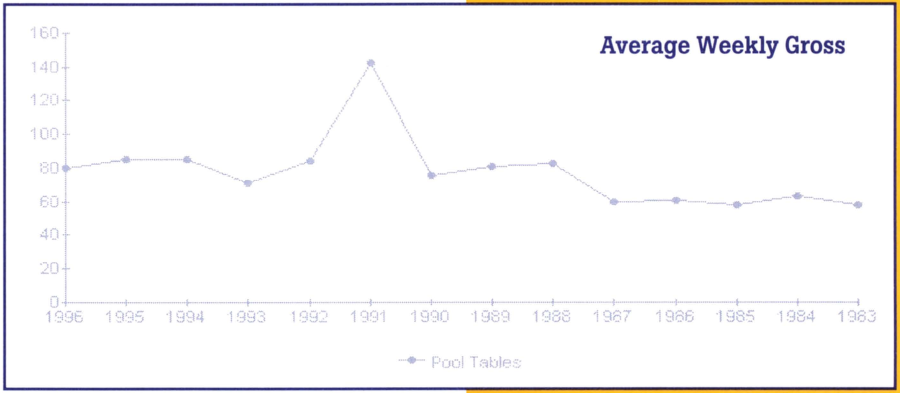
AVERAGE WEEKLY GROSS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS

YEAR	CDs	45s
1993	$174	$44
1992	138	63
1991	158	67
1990	139	73
1989	125	62
1988	128	59

Pool Tables



How much do you charge per play?



Pool Tables

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$80	$85	$85
Average # Per Operator:	47	27	35
Total # On Location:	133,000	122,000	115,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$553.2 Million	$535 Million	$508 Million
Total New Purchases:	12,000	23,000	*

71% operate pool tables

Average life-span: 10 years

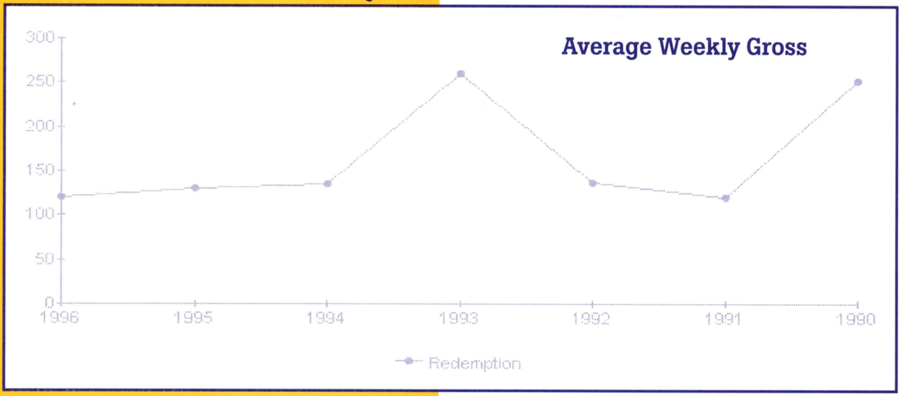
28% operate with leagues
43% operate without leagues
79% operate their pool tables for 10 or more years
35% charge 75 cents per play; 15% charge $1; and 47% charge 50 cents. (Only a scant 1% say they still charge 25 cents per play)
2% charge per hour ranging from $4 to $1.80 per person.

AVERAGE WEEKLY GROSS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS	
1993	$71
1992	84
1991	142
1990	76
1989	81
1988	83
1987	60
1986	61
1985	58
1984	63
1983	58

operator comments

> “As a street operator we cannot buy equipment that is affordable. Our niche is low-priced entertainment.”

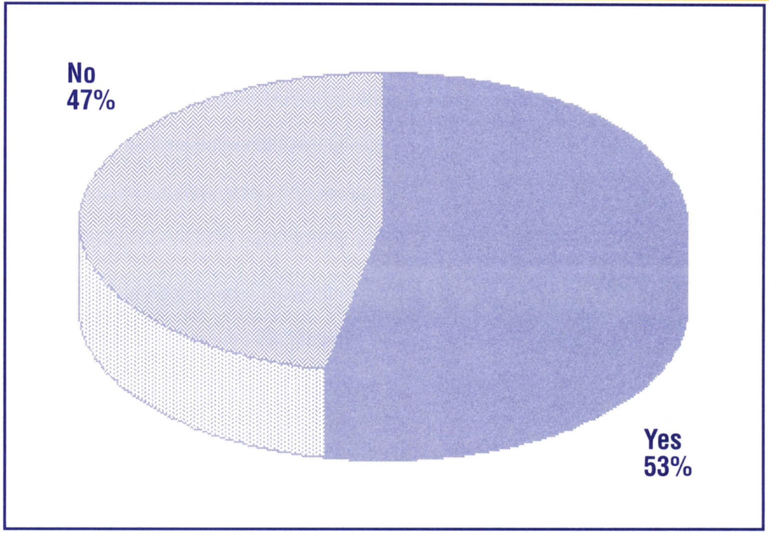
Redemption



operator comments

> “Lawmakers are not making redemption games illegal, but are making it almost impossible to procure such a license.”

Does redemption have a place in street locations?



Redemption

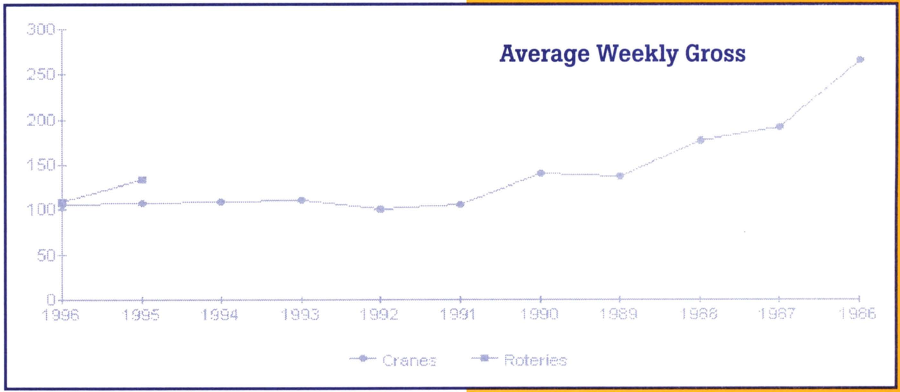
	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$121	$130	$135
Average # Per Operator:	64	56	54
Total # On Location:	125,000	120,000	116,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$786 Million	$811 Million	$814 Million
Total New Purchases:	20,000	31,000	47,000
Total Used Purchases:	16,000	*	*

49% operate redemption

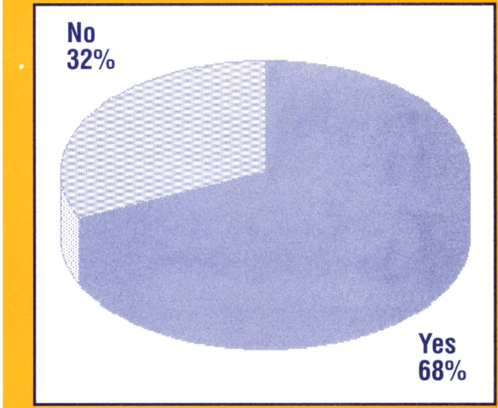
61% averaged over $100 gross per week
50% said they are expanding their redemption business
15% said they are using a special computer program to track their prize inventory
23% said there have been attempts in their states to have redemption declared illegal

AVERAGE WEEKLY GROSS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS	
1993	$261
1992	137
1991	121
1990	252

Cranes & Rotaries



Do you use location agreements?



Cranes

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$106	$107	$108
Average # Per Operator	18	13	16
Total # on Location:	51,840	43,500	52,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$285 million	$242 million	$291 million
Total New Purchases:	8,000	9,400	16,000

72% operate cranes

43% made $100 or more average weekly gross
The average win ratio: 30-35 percent

Rotaries

	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$109	$133
Average # Per Operator:	5	5
Total # On Location:	4,800	5,000
Annual Gross Revenue:	$27 million	$34.5 million
Total New Purchases:	1,000	1,000

24% operate rotaries

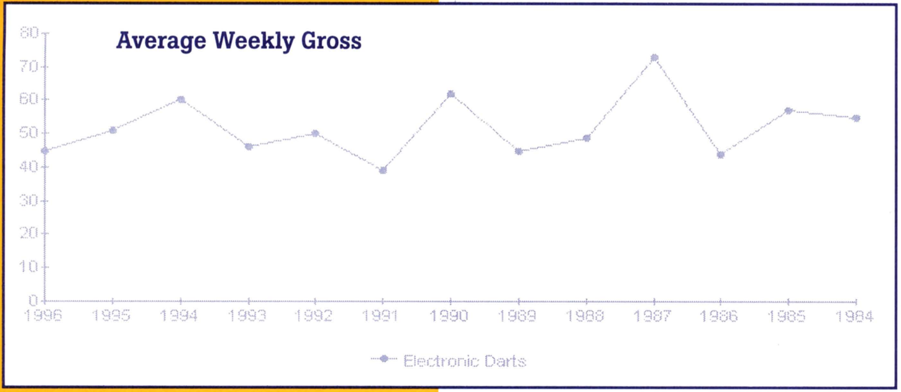
AVERAGE WEEKLY GROSS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS	
1993	$111
1992	101
1991	105
1990	140
1989	136
1988	177
1987	191
1986	266

operator comments

“Redemption is not the saving grace of amusements.”

“Only the right pieces for each location are worth the trouble of operating.”

Electronic Darts


Average Weekly Gross

FACT

Of the 54% who operate electronic darts, half are operating them with leagues.

operator comments

> “There are too many people out there who think they know what they are doing and are ruining the industry for those who really do.”

> “This is a tough business for anyone.”

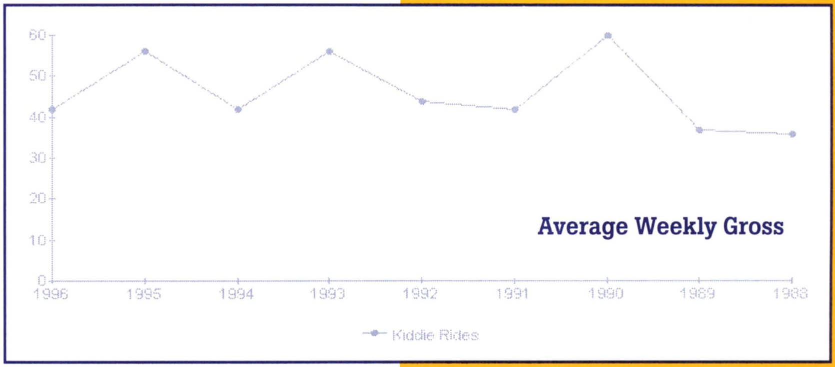
Electronic Darts

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$45	$51	$60
Average # Per Operator:	43	41	40
Total # On Location:	92,800	98,000	97,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$217 Million	$260 Million	$303 Million
Total New Purchases:	11,000	14,000	*

54% operate electronic darts

27% operate *with* a league program
27% operate *without* a league program
2% said that although they aren't operating darts now, they plan to soon

AVERAGE WEEKLY GROSS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS	
1993	$ 46
1992	50
1991	39
1990	62
1989	45
1988	49
1987	73
1986	44
1985	57
1984	55



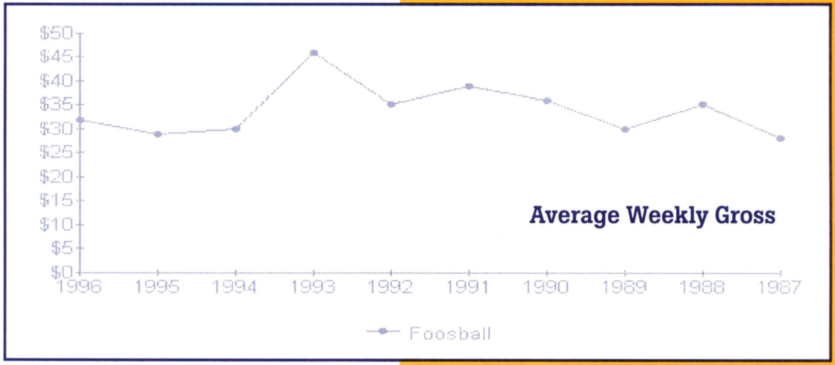
Kiddie Rides

Kiddie Rides

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$42	$56	$42
Average # Per Operator:	11	13	11
Total # On Location:	15,000	19,000	14,800
Total Annual Revenue:	$32.7 Million	$55 Million	$32 Million

33% operate kiddie rides

AVERAGE WEEKLY GROSS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS	
1993	$ 56
1992	44
1991	42
1990	60
1989	37
1988	36



Foosball

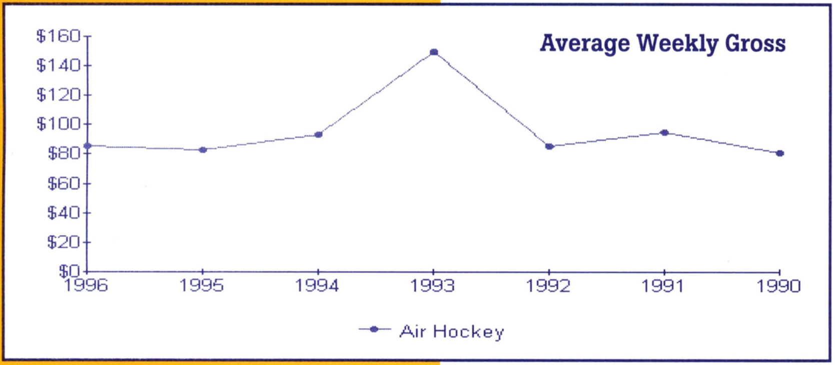
Foosball

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$32	$29	$30
Average # Per Operator:	8	6	6
Total # On Location:	16,000	12,400	13,500
Total Annual Revenue:	$26.6 Million	$18.7 Million	$21 Million
Total New Purchases:	3,200	*	*

50% operate foosball

Only 4% operate foosball with leagues

AVERAGE WEEKLY GROSS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS	
1993	$ 46
1992	35
1991	39
1990	36
1989	30
1988	35
1987	28



Air Hockey

Air Hockey

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$86	$83	$93
Average # Per Operator:	7	6	7
Total # On Location:	17,300	16,000	17,300
Total Annual Revenue:	$77.6 Million	$70 Million	$83.7 Million
Total New Purchases:	2,600	6,500	*

62% operate air hockey

31% made $100 or more average weekly gross;
25% under $50; 43% reported $50 - $100.

AVERAGE WEEKLY GROSS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS	
1993	$150
1992	86
1991	95
1990	81

PERCENTAGE OPERATING THESE OTHER ATTRACTIONS

Go-Karts: 7%
Bumper Boats: 7%
Mini Golf: 10%
Food: 15%
Batting Cages: 5%

Bumper Cars: 5%
Laser-Tag 5%
Soft Modular: 6%
Party Rooms: 15%

Cigarette Vending Machines and Other Vending

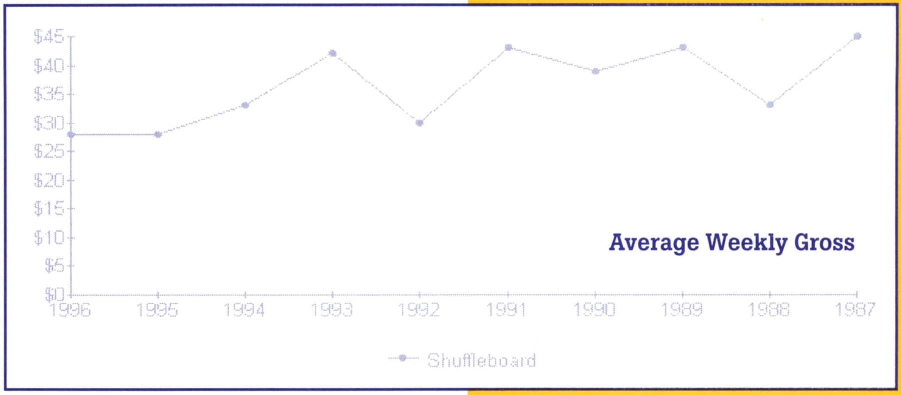
Cigarette Vending Machines

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$108	$97	$110
Average # Per Operator:	52	35	29
Total # On Location:	66,500	48,825	34,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$373 Million	$246 Million	$194 Million

32% operate cigarette vending machines

58% operate other types of vending machines

Shuffleboard



Shuffleboard

	1996	1995	1994
Average Weekly Gross:	$28	$28	$33
Average # Per Operator:	8	6	5
Total # On Location:	5,400	6,400	5,600
Total Annual Revenue:	$7.9 Million	$9.3 Million	$9.6 Million
Total New Purchases:	500	2,000	1,000

17% operate shuffleboards

Only 1% operate them with leagues

AVERAGE WEEKLY GROSS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS

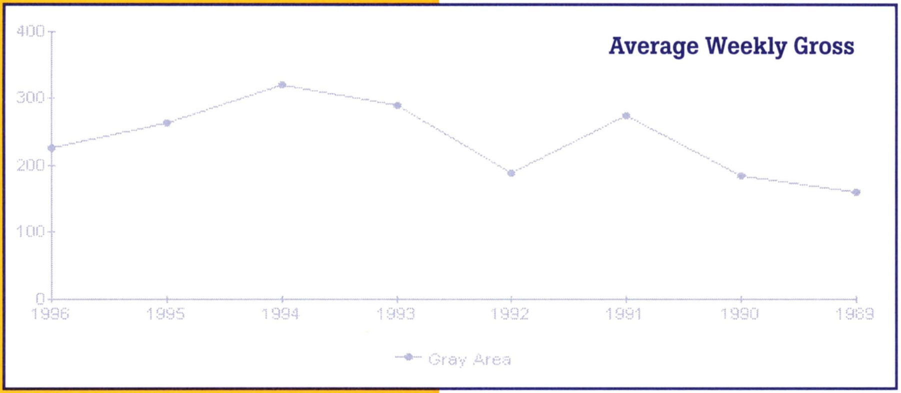
1993	$ 42
1992	30
1991	43
1990	39
1989	43
1988	33
1987	45
1986	*
1985	35
1984	30

operator comments

“There is some business out there if you are willing to find it. But the question is whether it’s worth the trouble.”

“There are too many unqualified operators or route personnel who do not give locations proper service. This causes a negative for the word vending”

8-Liners & Gray Area Games



8-Liners

	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$330	$407
Average # Per Operator:	45	26
Total # On Location:	37,800	37,700
Total Annual Revenue:	$648 Million	$797 Million

21% operate 8-liners

Gray Area Games

	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross	$227	$264
Average # Per Operator:	19	34
Total # On Location:	18,000	42,800
Total Annual Revenue:	$212 Million	$587 Million

23% operate gray area games (The location of this question made it very easy for many to overlook it. The numbers from last year are probably more accurate.)

AVERAGE WEEKLY GROSS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS	
1994	$320
1993	290
1992	188
1991	275
1990	185
1989	161

(no figures beyond 1989)

operator comments

> “The industry needs legalized video poker to make money, otherwise it will be only marginally profitable.”

> “My belief is that it (video poker) will devastate the industry.”

Operator Comments

VIDEO GAMES

✍ Sports type video games in taverns are doing good.

✍ Public will not pay the price we must charge to get a fair ROI in videos and pins.

✍ I buy mostly kits because the ROI is much greater than with dedicated videos.

✍ Bring on the tournament games.

✍ We need a universal platform. I like the Microsoft proposal.

✍ Looking forward to new blood in manufacturers, like Microsoft, Viacom, etc. But I fear Sega, Namco, and Steven Spielberg as operators with bad politics.

✍ I don't like Sega because they don't sell kits.

✍ Kit games are more affordable, especially Neo-Geo. Dedicated games are overpriced. We need new games instead of three or four versions of the same game.

✍ We feel most video game manufacturers have forgotten street vendors.

✍ Quit making new ones soooo fast!

✍ Games should be designed with features that cannot be duplicated for home.

✍ We need new, challenging games and new concepts. Get away from the same old themes.

✍ Very few video games live long enough to create a profit.

✍ We have severely downsized our video game business because there is no return on investment.

✍ Manufacturers need to put out ROM kits instead of selling dedicated and board kits. Enough with the 50s.

✍ Video games are overpriced, and thank you for the Nintendo 64 that cost our industry its livlihood.

✍ Video games are too expensive and risky to operate. It's difficult to obtain favorable ROI.

Operator Comments

✍ Game cost is much too high for the average street location.

✍ Why is it that manufacturers still sell kits overseas and dedicated only in the USA?

✍ No creativity. Prices are out of line.

✍ Dead business. Too few titles, not enough income to justify expense.

✍ We need a winner.

✍ Lower the price and stick to one good system.

✍ Standardization of parts is crucial.

✍ They are way too expensive for their short lifespan, and they keep coming out on cassette for home use.

✍ Be creative and price them fairly. A good example is Atari's *Area 51*.

✍ Only the very best are worth buying, for example, *Area 51, Tekken 2,* and *Cruisin' USA*.

✍ The outrageous cost of dedicated games compared to their lifespan\earning potential is killing the street vendors.

✍ I wish that they were never made.

✍ Prices are too high and longevity too short. It is getting very difficult to operate.

✍ I think they are flooding the market before you get your money out of what you have already.

✍ As it exits today, it is not profitable in street locations.

✍ Higher game prices are driving out small operators.

✍ Disaster.

✍ Bring on the PC platform.

✍ Too expensive. Financing is NOT the answer.

✍ In my area they are not money makers. We do them only as a last resort.

✍ Flat.

✍ Price, price, price, price.

✍ The price of machines is going up, revenues are going down. Manufacturers are pricing themselves out of business and us along with them.

✍ Tired of the *Mortal Kombat 3*'s imitations. Also price for games is way too high.

✍ Simulators are our only option today, but they are too expensive. Uprights are no longer innovative.

> **“We must change our ways: redemption, virtual reality, pinball. We must operate games that are interactive and cannot be duplicated on home TV or computer.”**

✍ Kits need to be an immediate option to dedicated. I don't need more $2,500 cabinets with $2,500 kits.

✍ We are at the crossroads in our industry. If we don't do something soon there won't be an industry left.

✍ Manufacturers should not operate arcades.

✍ Cost too high!

✍ Computer games.

✍ They no longer make the customer excited.

✍ Manufacturers should reduce prices.

✍ New games are too expensive.

✍ I have received a great deal of feedback from older players asking for more “traditional” games, ones that are less complicated yet great fun.

✍ They are DEAD! They cannot be helped.

✍ Monthly game rentals on national cable systems (unlimited game titles, and no amount of play limit) will finish off video play in street stops.

✍ It is a dying breed.

✍ Manufacturers seem to intentionally place bugs in games so that we have to upgrade.

✍ If it doesn't change it will disappear altogether. Home market does a better job than coin-op (a lot cheaper).

✍ Too expensive. Dedicated games have too many

Operator
Comments

problems. All parts are not working well.

✍ Players loose interest before games are paid for.

✍ Video games as we have known them seem to be long gone. The future seems to be in larger simulator type games.

✍ Need more systems like Neo-Geo. Factories need to remember everyone can't spend $18,000 per game.

✍ Too much of the same thing!

✍ Need more originality. Fewer clones of other games.

✍ Take longer to put out for the home system.

✍ Nolan Bushnell is right. Games are too difficult and not fun anymore. We have killed 75 percent of our locations (convenience stores, bars, etc.).

✍ The manufacturers are making games for arcades and not street locations.

✍ Very, very, very few videos can justify their existence anymore.

✍ Shorter life span, higher cost, and customers have higher expectation levels. They are too complicated for adults.

✍ We pay too much for the same game that kids put on their computer for $50.

✍ The operator is the "low man on the totem pole". He is left with few choices after the game revenue drops.

✍ Don't stay good long enough (fighting).

✍ Bad for fighting games. Good for big expensive games and redemption games.

✍ Nothing, I repeat, nothing is worth buying at his point. No ROI. We must lower the entry cost of equipment.

✍ I only buy games that are good for taverns. My bread and butter is the CD jukebox.

✍ No variety no good ones. Simulation games do very well.

✍ Video game prices, especially dedicated, are getting higher and higher to be affordable/profitable

✍ The only chance of reviving video games is a standard platform (i.e. NANI style) networkable games embracing PC type games. For coin-op it is taking way too long to make it operator-feasible

✍ They're doomed. We're just guinea pigs for the manufacturers so they can work out the bugs and sell it to the home market.

✍ *Cruisin USA* kept me in business. Still strong as ever. I have four of them.

✍ Where is the incentive for small operators? Buy 10 and get a deal is fine for large operators. Why not three or five for small operators?

✍ Video games and kits seem to creep up in price and not provide good income.

✍ To us they represent a necessary evil, we don't take a video spot.

✍ There is not enough support from factories for the street.

✍ Our customers are tired of all the "blood and guts" violence.

✍ Quality of electronic components (PC boards, monitors, etc.) has decreased. I have received new games with major failures and faults.

✍ Time for something other than fighting and driving games.

✍ They will die in street locations if we do not have more tools to promote them.

✍ I think that the industry needs to regulate itself or the government will do it for us.

✍ I think customers are tired of nothing but fighting games.

PINBALL

✍ Good bang for the buck.

✍ Doing well but need more pins like *Addam's Family;* everyone likes it.

✍ Sell them all while you can!

✍ People want simpler games that work and are fun to play.

✍ I think it is stronger than people think but you have to work at it. It is harder than video.

✍ Still strong because it is not readily available at home.

✍ Should remain good. Earnings\repair ratio has continued to improve.

✍ There is a select few good pins. Most are now fillers.

✍ I'm sticking to Bally Williams due to mechanical soundness.

✍ Good for the mix, but you'll never get rich off them.

✍ Cost too much.

Operator Comments

✍ Weak.

✍ Too many new selections, too often.

✍ Bring down the price and design. Then offer some for a wide range of ages.

✍ Keep pinballs affordable and easy to maintain.

✍ We sold off the last of our pinball machines. No ROI.

✍ Sucks. Need simpler games.

✍ The market is very soft, especially when the cost of a new pin is well over $3,000. You really can't justify it.

✍ Much more stable than videos but not as much income at first vs. video.

✍ Buy used or closeouts and only pay full price for the rare best.

✍ Prices are too high.

✍ Dead. No one wants to play pinball.

“Sports type video games in taverns are doing good.”

✍ Pins do well, but lots of work with down time.

✍ Collections start out at $125 to $150 and within 90 days you are at $65 to $90. Too many problems.

✍ Pinball market is very slow.

✍ Trying to make a comeback, but there's too much maintenance.

✍ Went soft expect for the new pin game.

✍ Steady.

✍ Dying fast.

✍ Pinball does well in some locations.

✍ Good trade-in value, but too high new.

✍ Always there.

✍ Bad pins are not good ROI.

✍ Playfields too complicated.

✍ Higher maintance, fewer revenues, but longer life.

✍ Pinball income has remained stable for years.

✍ Pinballs are too expensive.

✍ Pretty much dead.

✍ Stagnant.

✍ Still strong if kept up!

✍ Soft.

✍ I like the new pinballs from Bally and Williams.

✍ There are still a few die hard players around, but the market is definitely slow.

✍ Steady, dependable.

✍ Hard to maintain. Older generation play and younger kids dislike.

✍ At least you can't currently do pinball at home. I see the market staying the same.

✍ Pinball quality is down.

✍ A dying industry.

✍ In a slump right now but not as nervous about buying pinball as video.

✍ Seems to be steady at this time.

✍ I wait until they are on closeout always.

✍ Keep up with the times, current themes.

✍ Declining! Games are overpriced!

✍ Need some for good game mix but only one or two a year earn well.

✍ Worse ROI than videos.

✍ Too expensive to maintain. Too much labor to clean and rehab.

✍ I like pinballs better but a lot of repairs are needed.

✍ Too many new ones out each year.

✍ We need a less complex P.B. Simple playfield and less cost.

✍ Too expensive.

✍ Too pricey.

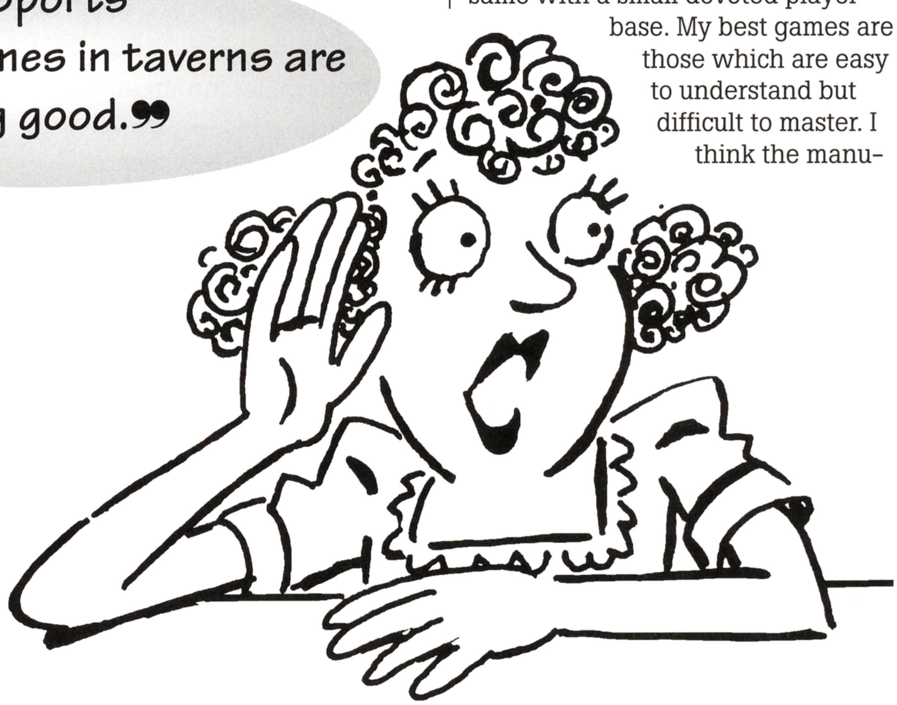
✍ Since *Addams Family*, pinball has gone straight south.

✍ Same old stuff and too complicated except for the serious player.

✍ Pinballs take in less, yet stay the same for a longer period of time.

✍ The revenue is dropping.

✍ The market for us remains the same with a small devoted player base. My best games are those which are easy to understand but difficult to master. I think the manu-



Operator Comments

facturers producing only four pinballs a year is a good idea. Every year technology prices drop. With all the high-tech equipment used to design and produce pinball machines you would think the cost to operators would also come down. I don't think a dollar per play is the answer.

✍ More stable than video.

✍ Pinballs are 10 percent of my route, but they are 90 percent of my problems.

✍ Bad.

✍ Pins need to be priced at $2500 with no junk released.

✍ Bad.

✍ Necessary evil but not profitable.

✍ Steady in bars, but can't pay three thousand dollars and make money.

✍ Very slow returns. We have had our fill of movie themes. Must get creative.

✍ Dying!

✍ Price!

✍ Too many too fast.

✍ It is risky to pay a higher price for new pinballs that may not last.

✍ Can make out with the $3,000 pinball price today. Priced out of sight.

✍ They seem to earn as well as ever.

✍ Bad for factories, good close-out prices on Premier, Capcom, and Sega models for operators. Williams games are way to expensive. New games all earn about the same.

✍ The pinball has gotten too complicated and cluttered on the playfield, and causes problems to service it and is causing unnecessary calls.

✍ Something must change or it won't be here much longer. Interest is dropping quickly.

✍ If it were not for longevity they would be a poor investment.

✍ Overpriced and poor ROI.

✍ High maintenance machines.

✍ Cost of new pins keeps escalating without a good return.

✍ They help us in the bar market and hold their value.

✍ Working on pinball leagues and play is increasing.

✍ The games are good but lack of player interest

✍ It has become a necessary evil to our business.

✍ I grew up playing pinball so I keep quite a few.

✍ Sorry to see Gottlieb leave us. Williams keep up the hits!

✍ Very slow.

✍ It is DEAD in street locations.

✍ ROI takes way too long.

✍ Bad. Can't pay for much after split.

✍ Pins make money for a long time if operators are willing to keep them up. Preventative maintenance is easy and effective.

✍ Very active play at certain locations.

JUKEBOXES

✍ We aren't keeping up with the times with music.

✍ I have a fear of location owned machines.

✍ Not yet familiar with digitally downloaded music.

✍ Downloading is the only long term answer for our industry.

✍ I don't know if digitally downloaded music will ever work due to downloading license fees.

✍ Unsure if the download issue is right. No one I know is even considering it.

✍ Downloading takes too long to format and eliminates the operator.

✍ Music makes money! We buy new CDs regularly. Jukeboxes have legs.

✍ It will be very risky to allow downloading music in a location.

✍ Don't know what to expect in the future—it is changing too rapidly. Should I buy CDs or not?

✍ We probably do not need manufacturers to download.

✍ Scared of downloaded music. Manufacturers may end up going directly to location owners and pushing out the operator.

✍ Downloading means no more CD inventory!!

✍ Do not want downloaded music yet. I have too much investment in CDs.

✍ Downloading music is one of the

Operator Comments

stupidest ideas since CD rom games

✍ It won't fly.

✍ Downloading music is a good idea.

✍ Downloading music will hurt the small operator.

✍ Expect several nationally organized companies to contractually sign up most high earning accounts.

✍ Downloading sounds like a way to get directly into my pocket.

✍ Initial cost is too much. Continuing costs never end.

✍ Jukeboxes are a dying industry.

✍ I only operate jukeboxes out of necessity.

✍ I don't know enough about downloading music.

✍ If operators can profit, downloading is OK.

✍ Downloading music will eliminate the operator.

> ❝Good, challenging games are becoming too expensive❞

✍ Downloaded music's future is in attractive boxes at a reasonable cost to operators.

✍ Should have been here last year.

✍ Want more info on it.

✍ I don't think the CD will be replaced within the next 10 years. It is too convenient.

✍ Music is still the backbone of our industry.

✍ Downloading sounds good if there are no problems.

✍ Don't do it!!!

✍ Downloading will kill the jukebox industry.

✍ A digital box with a hundred thousand songs won't earn any more than a 1,200-song CD box.

✍ Downloading is no better than CD boxes for earning potential, and licensing could be a problem.

✍ CDs are too expensive. They are very limited for locations that are profitable.

✍ With digitally downloaded music we will loose the ability to choose or tailor our own boxes.

✍ We operate 300 combo units. We do our own conversions making 458 CDs and it's been very successful.

✍ I have concerns about being taken out of the music coin-op business with this system.

✍ I don't want to see it.

✍ It looks like we will have to spend too much money.

✍ It will tie up the telephone line. How do you fix a crashed hard drive on a friday night?

✍ I am concerned about a lack of control of copyright fees on downloaded music.

✍ Music is good. Leave it alone.

Redemption/ Novelty

✍ Good, challenging games are becoming too pricey.

✍ It will be the salvation of our business. Do it or else!

✍ Simple, challenge, entertaining.

✍ Very strong in the proper location.

✍ Why spend all that money on something new when you can get four or five good used pieces for the same amount.

✍ They make good money but manufacturers need to improve quality.

✍ Redemption is not the saving grace of amusements.

✍ Lower the prices.

✍ Lawmakers are not making redemption games illegal, but are making it almost impossible to procure such a license.

✍ Good for kids, parents, operators, and location owners. It brings in a higher percentage than video.

✍ They are a pain in the rear.

✍ We need some new innovaive games, not rehashes of old ideas. Sound familiar?

✍ New stuff coming out costs too much.

✍ Redemption is the life blood of

Operator Comments

our FECs. There remains a high demand for family oriented games.

✍ Location must work harder to make this work.

✍ Run about 40 percent of revenue with about 10 percent of games. A must for all!!

✍ Redemption has leveled off since we started it about four years ago.

✍ I would like to see more prize-dispensing games INSTEAD of ticket-dispensing ones.

✍ It takes careful management and more resources. Merchandise is the key.

✍ Redemption requires lots of work to do it properly.

✍ It is suffering. The majority of the new redemption is just plain trash.

✍ I am getting out of redemption. The labor is too intensive.

✍ Great, fun business.

✍ Too expensive, no quality.

✍ It is on the downswing.

✍ I think it is fizzling out.

✍ Great fun! Time consuming.

✍ Only the right pieces for each location are worth the trouble of operating.

General

✍ Competition from out of state operators has increased because of 8-line play. South Carolina operators are moving in with 8-liners and establishing themselves in case gambling is legalized.

✍ Any arcade or FEC can work well in the right location with positive input.

✍ The industry needs legalized video poker to make money, otherwise it will be only marginally profitable.

✍ I strongly believe that as long as we keep making kids happy every thing else will fall into place.

✍ Promotion is the key to survival of street locations, but regressive taxes, discriminatory laws, and the shrinking of the street market is offsetting gains through promotion.

✍ We need lower priced video hit kits. We don't buy $2,500 kits, just used ones at $1,000 and less.

✍ I would like to see some manufacturers revive some of the classsics with today's technology.

✍ I am deeply concerned about the industry not being on board in my state with video pokers or lottery if made legal. My belief is that it will devestate the industry.

✍ A very unstable business with too much expensive equipment and still too many operators willing to buy business with too much commission and then not always following through on their promises. No split on sight—only monthly check of commission—is very well accepted and gives true indication of the income. Please keep up the good work for this industry.

> “I buy mostly kits because the ROI is much greater than with dedicated videos.”

✍ Games costs are too much. Manufacturers are operating in my neighborhood.

✍ There are too many people out there who think they know what they are doing and are ruining the industry for those who really do.

✍ The industry is over saturated. I see a shakeout on the horizon.

✍ There are too many unqualified operators or route personnel who do not give locations proper service. This causes a negative for the word vending.

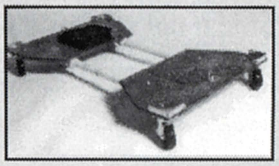
✍ Most operators are complaining but refuse to go to $1.50 play and some are still on 50/50 split instead of 60/40.

✍ Beware of purchasing dedicated upright video games. They are overpriced with little residual value.

✍ This is a tough business for anyone.

✍ FECs are getting too crowded, games cost too much, customers have much higher expectation level, and a lot of NEW operators don't have a clue about details of operating.

✍ There is some business out there if you are willing to find it. But the question is whether it's worth the trouble.



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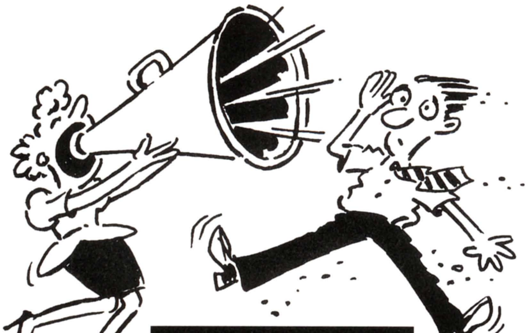


Operator Comments

✍ Aristo type items are the future! Rowe and NSM need to wake up. Atari, Bally, and Williams, are out of touch with the street.

✍ The industry is not healthy. There is not enough adult product (videos) for street routes. Revenue from phonographs and pool tables subsidizes videos and pins.

✍ This is an industry that is on the way out. We are in the buggie whip business.

✍ Too many low budget operators entering, who seem to have or will have a negative long-term impact. The home market will have a major negative impact.

✍ The small operator is being squeezed by the manufacturers and eventually will be left out.

✍ The industry is very competitive these days with many small operators dropping out. I see a greater trend toward more expensive high tech simulators and VR pieces which could further put the squeeze on many of us.

✍ In deep trouble. Lazy manufacurers, lazy operators. Prices too high, play too low.

✍ Machines too pricey for the industry.

✍ Too many FECs. But if it wasn't for FECs manufacturers could shut down.

✍ As a street operator we cannot buy equipment that is affordable. Our niche is low priced entertainment.

✍ We need a 60/40 split instead of 50/50.

✍ A repeat of the theatre business. Out with the little guy.

✍ Great but you have to work very hard.

✍ Changing all the time. You just have to change with it.

✍ Too many operators not having legislative business liability insurance.

✍ Growing very quickly.

✍ I need to expand in order to stay in business. I also need to buy only new games.

✍ Slow down on manufacturing. Give us time to get our money out of what we have. Games become obsolete too soon.

✍ The industry will downsize in terms of the number of operators. Only the best will stay in business.

✍ Collection gross is down from last year.

✍ We need lower prices on equipment.

✍ Our industry is in trouble, especially due to unscrupulous distributors who will sell directly to locations.

✍ Competition is very cut throat. You must be careful in buying. Leasing keeps us closer to the deep pockets people.

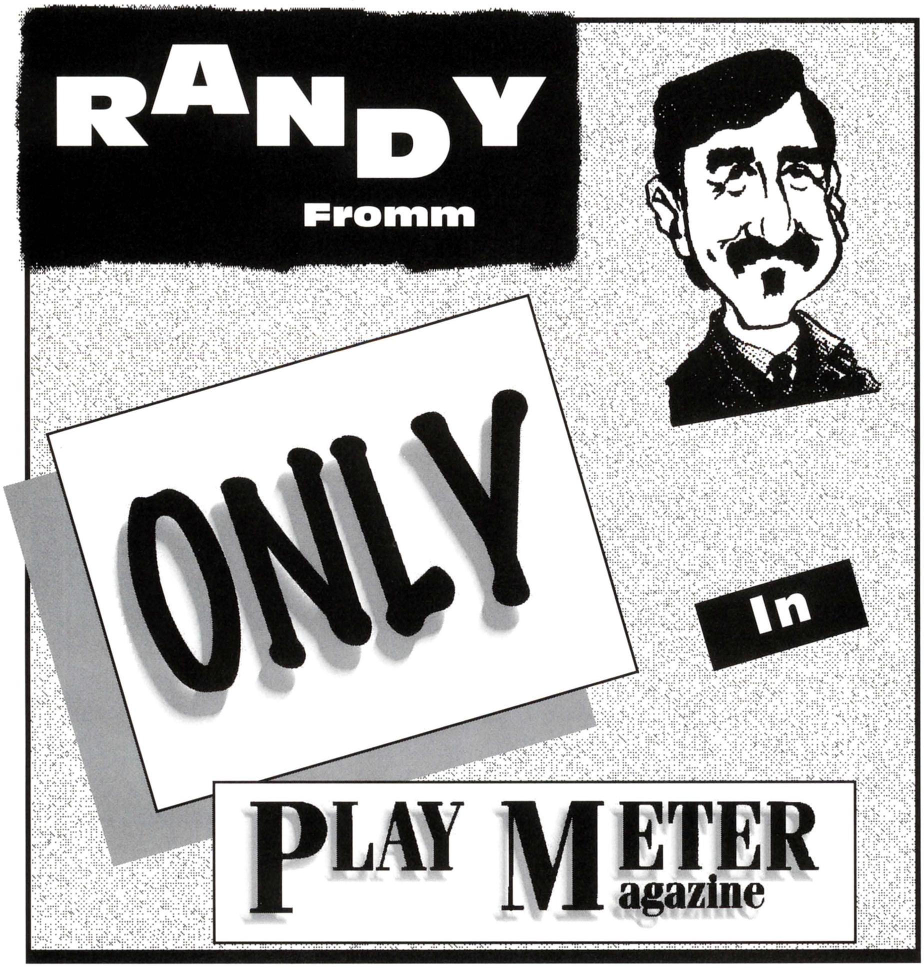
✍ You need a section on legal gaming in your magazine. It is the largest part of our business.

✍ Tough times are causing operators to forget their manners and what they have fought for. They seem happy to let locations beat them up on equipment and commission.

✍ We must change our ways: redemption, virtual reality, pinball. We must operate games that are interactive and can not be duplicated on home TV or computer.

✍ There are an awful lot of people trying or wishing to open an FEC. It seems that many do not understand market limitations.

✍ Our old video games are dead except for *Ms. Pac-Man*. Can't pay for new video games with the play they now get. ▲



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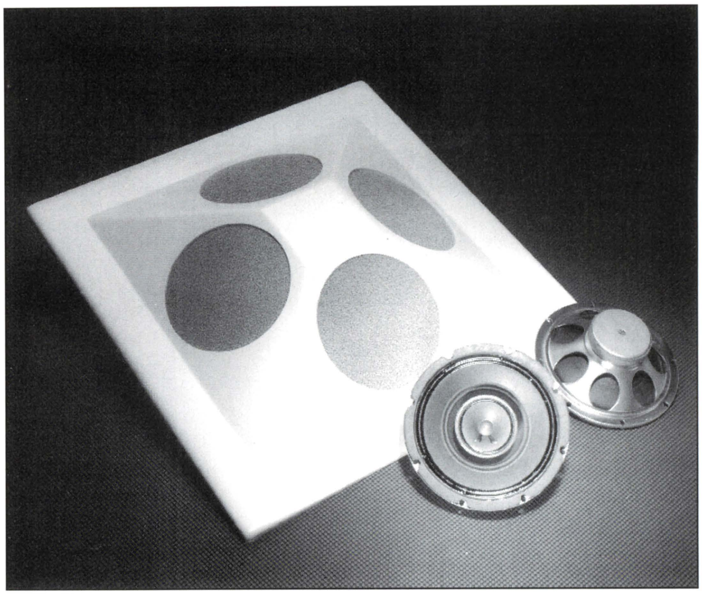

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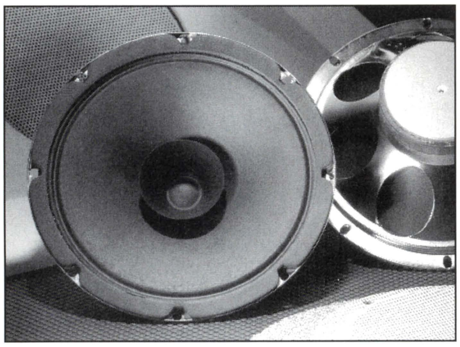

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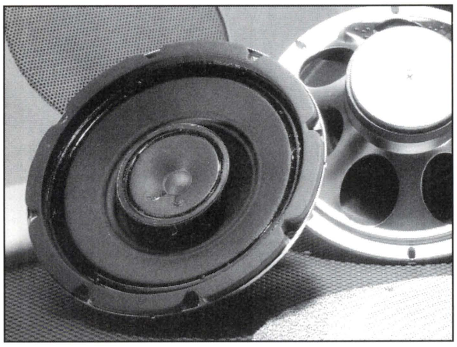

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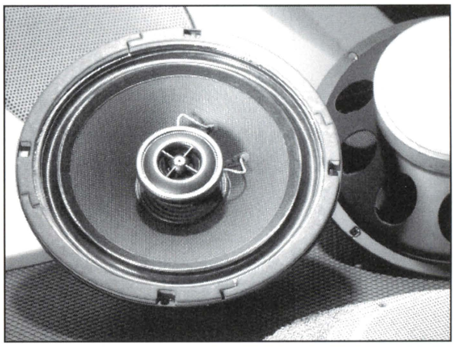

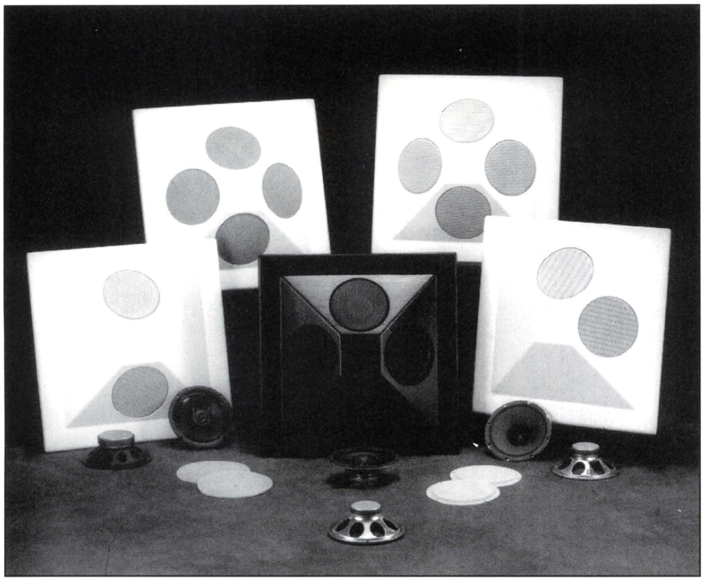

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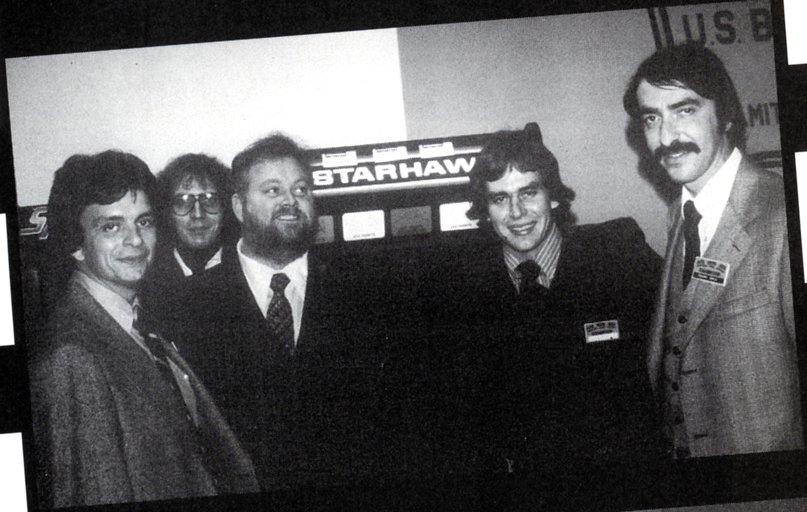
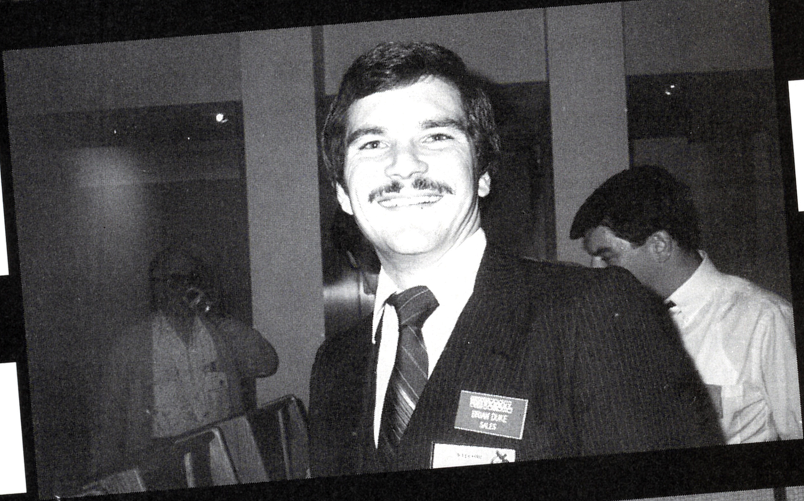


If you remember this group, you've been in the industry a mighty long time. In front of Cinematronics' *Starhawk* game, (l-r): Tom Stroud, unknown, Shane Breaks, David Stroud, and Frank Sola. This photo was taken at an ATE show.



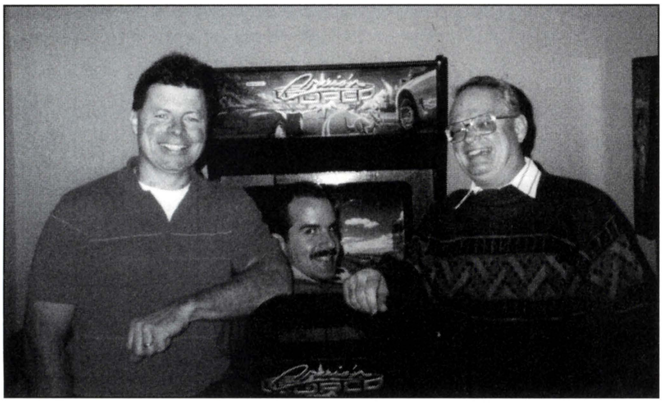
This is Brian Duke, formerly of Capcom, and now with Play Net, at a Peach State Distributing open house. The Universal (remember *Mr. Do!*) badge puts this photo about 1983.

Here are Rene Lopez (l) and Steve Walton taken a few years ago. I'm pretty sure that's Brady's Blair Norris in the background. Blair just celebrated 35 years with Brady. Steve was with Data East when this photo was taken at a Brady open house.

I know this photo is a few years old, but Leslie Erickson (Todd of Summit Amusements' wife), Bob Lentz (now of Merit), and Linda (wife of Jim) Calore still look as great as they did then!

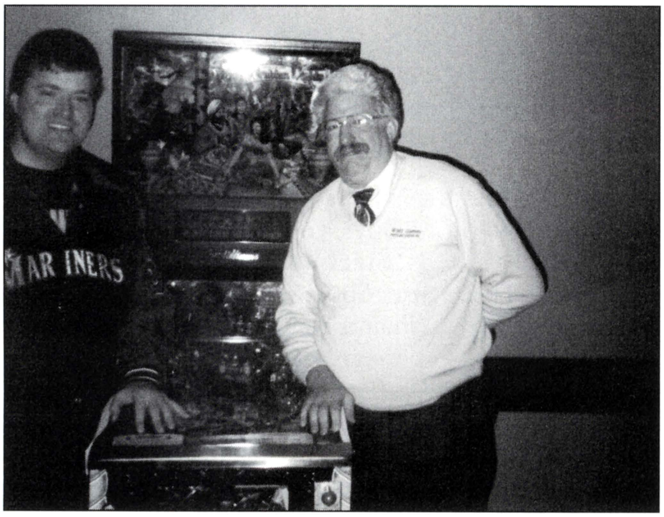
Brady Dist./ Orlando Fla.

The staff extends thanks to all who took the time to attend and make the fall event a success. For those who could not make it, hope to see you next year.



The Outback Entertainment crew, (l-r): Steve McGrath, Cary Mitchell, and Jody Kerlee by Midway's *Cruis'n World*.

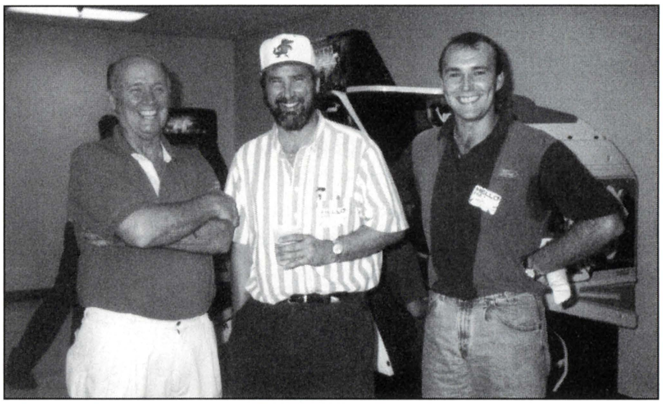
Bob Carrol of Systems Amusement with Steve Livingston of Fun Times LLC stop to play Midway's *NBA Maximum Hang Time*.



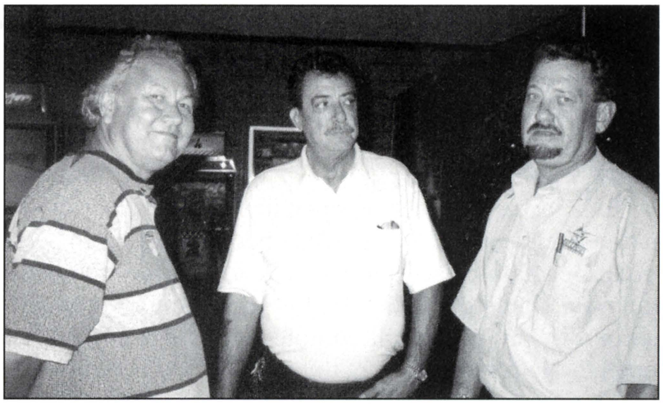
Robert Nye of Rob's Amusement talks pinball by Bally's *Arabian Nights* with Williams Bally/Midway's Tom Cahill.

Music-Vend/ Spokane, Wash.

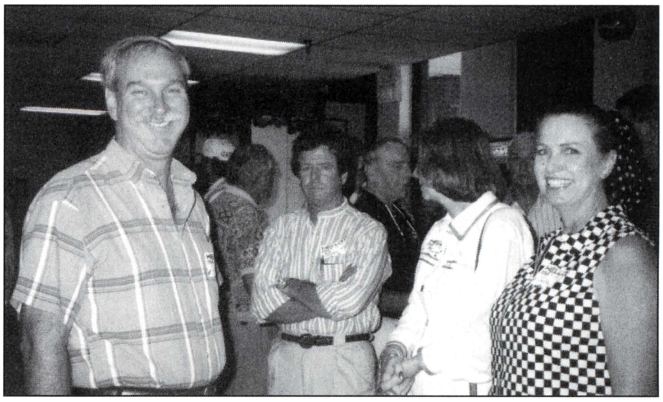
It was an exceptional turnout at the Red Lion Hotel to see the latest industry equipment and attend a Williams Bally/Midway service school.



From left: Jim Kirby of B & B Vending, Phil McBride of T & G Music, and a B & B technician by Sega GameWorks' *Gunblade NY* and *Virtual On*.



Phil Jaworski (l) of 4-Jay's Inc. joins Chip Mahoney of C & M Darts and Hutch Hutchingson of Tri County Dist.



In the crowd were, (l-r): Dale Williams of Williams Amusements, Rich and Bev Holley of Southeast Game Brokers, and Jackie Williams.

GUEST
COMMENTARY

Can we talk?

STEVE BODENSTEIN

> *"You give them eyes but they do not see.*
> *You give them ears yet they do not hear."*

Many years ago, in an interview with Play Meter magazine, I proposed that the heads of all the game manufacturers be required to operate a small route and keep it profitable in order to retain their positions.

This generated quite a few angry comments from both manufacturers as well as distributors. Apparently they objected to the point I was trying to make, which was and still is, that they simply do not understand the realities of the operating business. For this I blame both the manufacturer and the operator. I am convinced that these two parties for some strange reason do not communicate with each other.

Today I wish to issue an open invitation to all manufacturers. While I do not expect it to be accepted, I make it anyway: Come on, let's talk! Let me show you my books, all completely open for your inspection, nothing hidden. Come out on my route, see the locations, meet the owners. Not a gripe session, no complaints, just unvarnished reality. Draw your own conclusions.

I run a pretty good operation, if I do say so myself. We are a midsize firm with long-term employees. We are fully automated, use contracts, have long-term accounts, and spend above the average for new equipment. We try to plan strategically for the future and follow industry trends closely. Ask our local distributor about us. Check our reputation. Then come and have your eyes opened.

Why do I make this offer? Why would I offer you my proprietary information? For free? Because you need it. And if you need it, we all need it. One look at your products, the prices and designs, show just how badly you need this information. You just do not have an adequate handle on life on the street.

Shall we look at a few specific examples?

A brand new start-up company with new technology offering a multiplayer, interactive product the "size of a small pool table." Obviously, these people, despite their many years in the industry, do not understand just how difficult it is to get a location owner to part with that much space, no matter how good the product is.

Space in a tavern or any other street location is expensive and at a premium. Why is this piece so large? If you think that we are going to take out pool tables to place this product, think again.

Here's another example: A major manufacturer comes out with a long-awaited product several months later than the announced introduction date. "Due to the late introduction date (September) we will not release this product to the home market until late spring (June?)" says a spokesperson.

OK, guys, follow the math. The piece costs $5,500. If it earns $200 per week for 40 weeks at a 40 percent commission to the location, the operator cannot recover his cost, let alone operating expenses by the time the game hits the home market. You say this game will earn more than a $200 per week average for all 40 weeks? Just where did you test this thing? Not on a route, that's for sure.

Let's examine some general numbers. Take, for example, a 425-piece route earning $650,000 per year. In general, a route needs to turn over about 30 percent of its inventory yearly to stay fairly current. In this case that's 127 new games per year. If the route operator reinvests 30 percent of his earnings yearly that's $195,000. If the average cost of new equipment, spread out over all types of games is $3,000, then the most this operator can buy is 65 new games a year. Even allowing for trade-ins, this operator will fall short of what is needed to maintain a healthy operation.

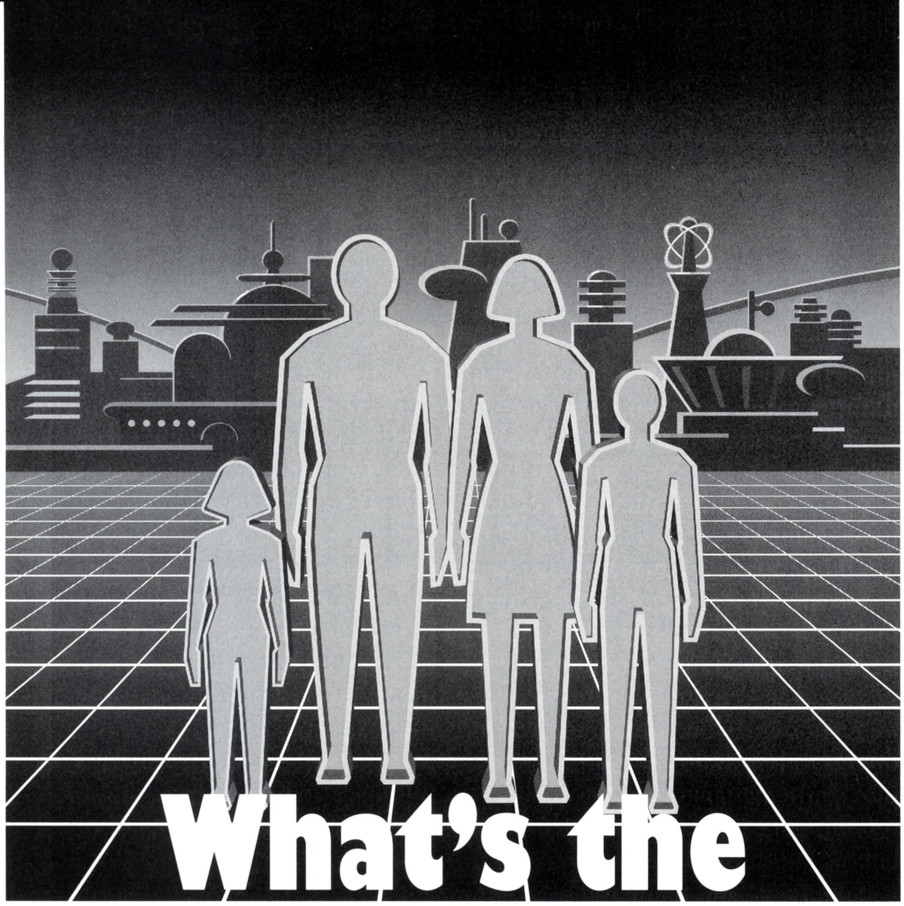
Guys, we cannot survive without you. Our whole industry is fueled by new product. If we cannot purchase new product in sufficient quantities, then we start a downward earnings spiral that will spell doom to us all.

> *"Guys, we cannot survive without you. Our whole industry is fueled by new product."*

Guys, you cannot survive without us. Starve us out and you're gone also. You go, we go. We go, you go. Yin and Yang.

Come, let's talk...please. ▲

Steve is the president of Game Exchange/Southeast in Marietta, Ga. He can be reached at (770)594-7215, (770)594-000 or fax (770)594-7756.



What's the future of family entertainment?

What will the family of the 21st century do for fun? With technological advances changing so many fundamental aspects of life at the end of this millennium, it's an intriguing question.

This issue was taken up by three so-called "visionaries" at the Fun Expo '96 seminar, "High Tech 2001: The Visionaries Speak." The panel included moderator Louis Brill of Illuminations, Clark Dodsworth of Osage Associates, Celia Pearce of Entertainment Venue Group, and Mark Ward of Infotainment Inc.

While most FEC operators have traditionally been focused on ways of drawing families out of the home, Dodsworth said the rise of networking capabilities provides avenues for including home entertainment consumers in the revenue mix. For instance, players at home could be linked with on-site customers in a way that gives them a taste of the larger attraction. It might also mean a smaller FEC networking its players with others at a larger theme park.

"It's about to become very large," he said. "The reason I like this is it becomes a hierarchical (or top to bottom) organization. The customer that comes to your site gets a much more exciting experience, and that creates a draw for the home user."

In making his case, Dodsworth, cited his own involvement in what he described as an animated, multiuser virtual world with players from all over the world competing 24 hours a day on Compuserve. He also noted the fact that companies are currently marketing Internet products and services in rural and remote areas.

A configuration between home and location-based entertainment is made all the more possible by rapid advances in PC graphics, long seen as inferior to those produced by coin-op manufacturers, and this opens the door to competition from companies that have previously focused their efforts on business computing, military applications, and large-scale amusement venues.

In fact, Dodsworth predicted that the average PC will have graphic capabilities comparable to current driving simulator games within the next year. "We're still seeing the continuous cannibalization of arcade level technology by the home market."

Potential competitors are also looking closely at entertainment trends such as licensing and theming that have become standard in location-based entertainment. "These people are thinking the same thoughts: first using technology effectively and second theming," Dodsworth said. "If those guys are thinking that closely about theming, then it behooves us to think very seriously about computers and how best to use them. There is about to be more competition. These folks are after entertainment dollars."

In presenting a similar picture of emerging markets, Pearce said that the trend toward interactivity, which is being driven by technology, also finds support from current cultural values.

"I think what people are really looking for are positive ways of being together," she said, noting that Las Vegas was one good example of an entertainment location that had adapted to this new model. "When families go out, they don't want to shoot each other. They want to do something that's going to enhance the unit. Interactivity is not just a growing trend, it is becoming a mainstay of entertainment."

Another example of this cultural trend, Pearce said, was the top grossing movie of 1995, "Babe," which was ostensibly a children's story that also contained sophisticated content enjoyed by viewers of all ages. "These are the kinds of things people are gravitating to."

According to Pearce, families are also seeking out multigenerational entertainment in a wide range of new venues such as malls and theme restaurants that are closer to home as opposed to high-threshold, distant locations like theme parks.

This shift in focus de-emphasizes location to some extent and provides new opportunities in family entertainment on a local level, but it also requires in-depth research and a savvy instinct toward current tastes.

"We need to come up with some really cool stuff to get them out of the house and once they're there it needs to meet the expectations of interactivity and participation," Pearce said. "The more interactive an experience, the more repeatable because every time it's going to be different."

Future interactive entertainment experiences may also find their way into other fields, such as education and science, according to Ward, who gave a brief history of the motion simulation industry.

Ward said that like the movies, which evolved from a novelty item to an accepted method of communicating information and telling stories, so motion simulation will find its way into classes, museums, and possibly even the home through an Internet link.

"Too much time, energy, and resources have been invested to see this industry fade away," he said. "Twenty years from now I think simulation will be a big industry. High quality titles will abound and prices will come down. Increased demand will fuel development."

Ward also predicted that simulation will shift from the more expensive film-based experiences to computer-generated images, and that by the early 21st century increases in computing power will make "global telepresence events" possible via the Internet.

Changes ahead for coin-op

The seminar titled "Viva La Coin-Op Revolution: Change is Good!" put coin-op product under a microscope, scrutinized by a panel composed of Dr. John N. Latta of 4th Wave Inc., Steve Siegel of Powerplay Amusements/Cool World, Richard Ditton of Incredible Technologies, and James Plamondon of Microsoft Corp. The moderator was Marcus Webb of RePlay Magazine.

Latta, a consultant who has done extensive research in the coin-op field said, "This is an ailing industry. Name a piece of media that is as big as a video game and has only one use." He noted that the games are the same size as a coffin.

He pointed to the shrinking number of operators and game costs as contributing factors to the industry's present plight. "Look at game costs," he said, "$10,000 for a game with a 33-inch monitor and $15,000 to $17,000 for a game with a 50-inch monitor. Players love them but operators feel they can never recover their money." He called it "playing the return on investment squeeze."

Latta continued, "Technology really plays a major role in terms of success. Technology is driving the industry. The question is, 'How do you make it economically viable?' You're dropping half the (game) income month by month the first three months. It's difficult to

Richard Ditton (r) of Incredible Technologies talks with an attendee after the seminar on change in coin-op.

recover the game's purchase price.

"You can't predict the future—it's a hit business. You have no clue when to buy and sell. What you're trading is a commodity in a cabinet. These (games) are gross square feet occupiers. Neo-Geo may be past its prime but it provides a model."

The bottom line, as far as Latta is concerned: "You want more companies creating content that may become hit titles. The real dynamic of the industry is the software, not the hardware."

Ditton discussed COVGT, or Coin-Op Video Game Tournaments, which he described as falling into two types: 1) stand alone such as Merit Megatouch and Dynamo Solitaire, and 2) modem-connected such as the National Amusement Network Inc. and the International Tournament System.

According to Ditton, tournament games can be very successful if operators are ready to put in time to promote them (part of the money in the cashbox goes to winnings—small amounts).

Modem-connected systems allow for more winnings, said Ditton. NANI requires dedicated phone lines. ITS is plug- and-play for the Incredible Technologies games Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee 3D Golf and World Class Bowling. ITS, which defines the rules and handles everything such as advertising and notifying winners, has about 1,000 units in the field.

Plamondon covered the Microsoft Windows proposal he had outlined at the earlier AMOA Expo '96. "There are a lot of other things players could be doing," he said, "and they're doing them. We want to bring players back.

"The basic problem is that you're paying for the same things over and over. Everything seems to come down but game prices. There has been a 77 percent increase in game prices over the last four years while computers are getting cheaper and more powerful at the same time."

Microsoft spends $2 billion annually on research, said Plamondon, who explained: "We want to make Windows 95 the premier game platform. We recognize the importance of computer graphics. The PC industry has discovered computer graphics. The graphics we develop pay for themselves, which we see as important in this market. There is no licensing fee to use Windows 95 as a platform. We're not talking about something like home systems but a high-end, leading-edge work station platform."

Plamondon added, "You should just pay for the software. We propose a standardized platform and standardized control panels. Software is the 'gas' of the coin-op industry."

Will home games be able to make the lateral move to coin-op? "Home games don't play well in coin-op," said Plamondon, "which needs an adrenaline rush in 2-1/2 minutes. We don't know how to develop coin-op games; that's why we are working with those who do."

Operators could thereby reduce their risk with games that would run around $500 to $750 each. The first titles are expected to debut in the middle of 1997. For proof of the PC-based platform's possibilities Plamondon pointed to the number of Windows-based games that are available.

Steve Siegel gave the operator's viewpoint: "Coin-op is at an all-time low. The sheer lack of releases is our biggest problem. There were 1,700 games shown at E3 this year vs. a small handful brought out for the coin-op community. There is more excitement on the shelves of Blockbuster than in the arcades."

> ***"You want more companies creating content that may become hit titles. The real dynamic of the industry is the software, not the hardware."***

He asked, "Why are third party developers not programming for our industry?"

For one, there are numerous systems currently available but they are not being supported, explained Siegel. "Now Microsoft wants to come out with another one."

If there is going to be a new system, Siegel would prefer more than one. "The (lower price of) systems allow us to get more of the deluxe games that bring people into locations," he said. As an example he cited Tekken 3: "You can get four Tekken 3 (kits) for the cost of one Virtua Fighter 3, so which one is the best buy?"

Siegel expressed strong support for the distributor network, "It is extremely important; it has to remain intact."

Straight to the bottom line: ROI

Taking the Joe Friday approach, the seminar titled "Just the Facts, Ma'am: ROI for Realists" went straight to the bottom line. The panel included Roger Robinson of Friendly Fun Centers, Steve Siegel of Powerplay Amusements/Cool World, and Frank Seninsky of Alpha-Omega Amusements.

Robinson's area of expertise is bowling/fun center operations; Siegel knows the route side of the business as well as the family entertainment side; and Seninsky has paid his industry dues in operations, distribution, and consulting both domestically and internationally.

For Robinson, it all comes down to defining goals, allocating resources, and evaluating results objectively and subjectively. Before embarking on a project, Robinson recommends you ask yourself how the investment mixes and matches with what you are trying to accomplish.

"In simple terms, every investment decision can be reduced to a cost/benefit analysis," he said. "Generally, if the benefits outweigh the costs we will proceed, while if the opposite it true we will not. I call this process the WIIFM Theory (What's in it for me?)."

Without a plan, Robinson maintains, "You won't know where you are going or when you get there. You need a plan. After all, if you don't know where you are going, how will you know which road to take?"

According to Robinson, "An analysis of ROI must consider the short- and long-term goals of the organization. The appropriate ROI varies from individual to individual, from company to company, from industry to industry. The point is that it all depends; you must create your own risk/reward standards. Don't stick strictly to a hard numbers approach."

Siegel explained that his business depends on tourism. "The summer is getting shorter with later school year closings and earlier openings," he said.

He detailed how he started with a free-standing arcade, then added food and rides including a roller coaster. "Attractions build on other attractions," he said. "Be sure to have all rides online at the same time."

Mother Nature threw Siegel a few curves this year in terms of two hurricanes that dealt serious blows to his business and interrupted what should have been a good summer season. He recommended looking into Loss of Revenue insurance to protect your business from unforeseen calamity.

Another bit of advice: "When you're developing a center, start-up, or expansion, be cautious in estimating costs."

For Seninsky, tracking the history of revenues is crucial: "You must know fast it is going up or going down." He has devised a formula he calls the Rubber Band Formula that takes into consideration the real market value of a game today to find out which ones are profit centers. (He follows the five percent rule: an average game costs $4,000-plus so each game should take in $200 a week. It follows that a $15,000 game should earn five times what a $3,000 game earns.)

Picture this...

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"Mid-range games are where you make your money," said Seninsky. "Low-end games are not worth it for the time to collect, clean, and repair. Top or high-end games are where you think you make money but their costs take away (from revenue). But you have to have the new games to bring people in and keep them there."

Seninsky recommended location owners employ the services of a professional coin operator who will advise on game rankings and other details such as the floor plan, traffic patterns, and figuring out what factors are influencing any revenue changes.

"You can't move big items like large rides and soft modular play," said Seninsky, "but you can change the redemption counter, wall decorations, and move coin-op games—all to add flash and make the place look different."

Several other points came out in the question and answer period:

☛ The first step is a feasibility study. One of the biggest mistakes is not doing one.

☛ Redemption is labor intensive; it's a lot of hard work but the benefits are there.

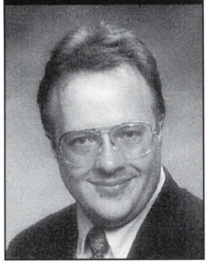
☛ It takes 30 days to regulate ticket payout. A 10-second change by the location can destroy a month's worth of work.

☛ Put videos and teen games away from games for young children.

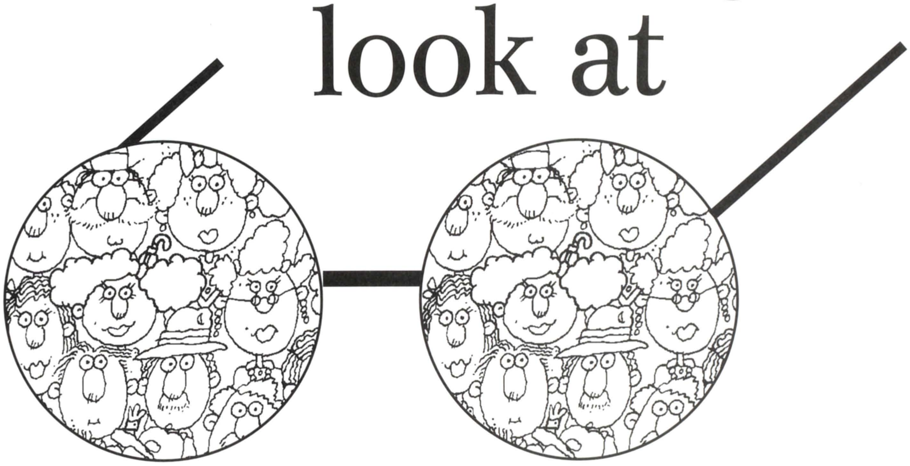
☛ The best deal is cut when both parties walk away from the table feeling they didn't get the best deal.

☛ Deluxe games priced over $10,000 deserve to be on a 60/40 split.

☛ Be smart and fair; it's the only way to make money. ▲



Taking a look at



CHARITY EVENTS

VIC FORTENBACH

Having a charity event at your FEC is wonderful public relations. It's also a great way to get people into your place that may never have been there before.

There are many different kinds of events you can sponsor. The easiest is a canned food drive for the needy. Give two-for-one golf coupons or one to four game tokens for every can of food brought in. Be sure to post a limit of two cans per person so the promotion does not get out of hand.

Another idea is aimed at the Christmas holidays. The Marine Corps or local sheriff's department often sponsor a toy drive (Toys for Tots). If you want to get involved, the Marines or Sheriff's office will provide a collection box for toys. But don't simply put the box in front of your location where theft might occur, keep it in sight but out of the public's touch!

The best part of the toys program is the exposure you will get for having a collection box at your FEC. The media joins in and gives free voice overs on commercials for participating merchants (this includes FECs). But you might want to make sure that you do get the exposure. Somehow FECs often get left off of the list of merchants that have collection boxes.

The Toys for Tots program is a perfect promotional tie-in for your redemption center. Post a sign that reads something like this: "Donate prizes you've won with tickets and get a free game of minigolf or 20 free tokens for each prize donated." Of course, put a limit on how many tokens or free games per person will be allowed.

Another type of charity is to donate say five percent of a chosen day's golf sales or any other attraction to a worthy charity. If a special need arises, be sure to focus your charity event toward that situation. Examples include the Red Cross for the Oklahoma Federal building explosion or other disaster. You could also focus on the needy at Easter, Thanksgiving, or Christmas.

If you focus on a local disaster or charity make sure it's a popular one, with local media coverage. Local media coverage is very important! I don't mean to sound crass, but this is a promotion geared toward a worthy cause and you're looking to get something out of it! Some not-for-profit groups claim to be or to sponsor a charity. Be careful in choosing a charity because any event you have at your park should benefit both you and the charity. You get the exposure and they get a donation.

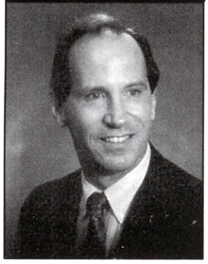
Lots of small charities are not legitimate. It might be nice to help out a small local charity, but if there is no good exposure from that charity (media or otherwise) you are wasting your time and effort. The bottom line is to sponsor a charity that will bring customers into your FEC that will generate more income and make everyone feel good!

Specialized charities are great. These might be the local fire or police department having fund raisers at your FEC. Often, the printing for the advertising posters is donated, and so is the media. All you have to do is let them use your park for something like a golf tournament between the fire department and the police department. The public will find this a great attraction, and they'll be exposed to your location.

You can also hold a raffle of donated items from local merchants. The only consideration you will have to be prepared for is crowd control. This includes extra staff for the go-karts and the snack bar. Don't forget the public address system for the raffle. ▲

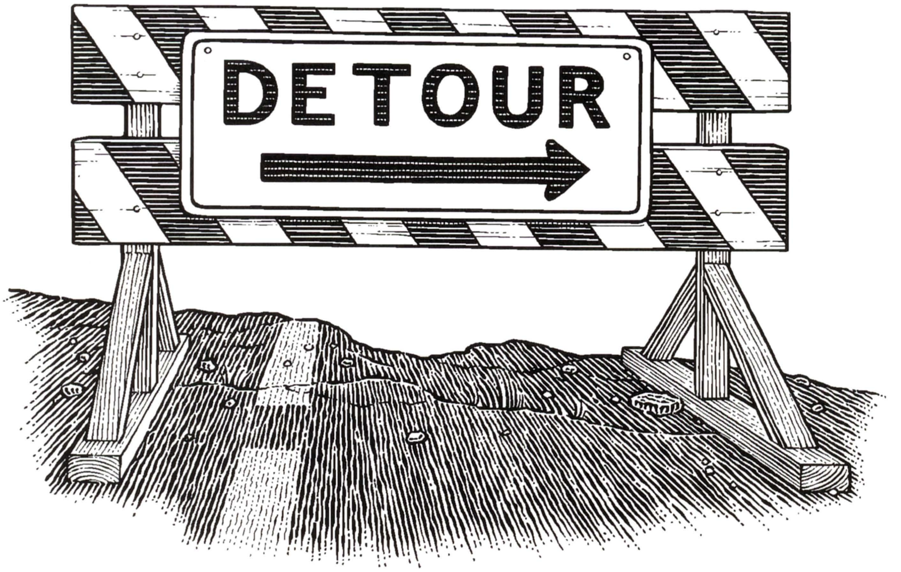
LEGAL
EAGLE

The barrier to reform



TOM FRICKE

Until now, most of what I have written in this column has been about how absurd the law is concerning amusement redemption. Trust me, the law is even more absurd than I have presented to date, and I will continue painting this canvas in future issues.



However, the point of this entire series of essays on Redemption and the Law™ is not merely that the law needs to be changed. The point is also to offer practical suggestions concerning how to change it. Already, we have supplied a white paper which may be adapted to support any state-level legislative proposal to decriminalize amusement games which involve skill in play (regardless of predominance of skill) so long as the prize is limited. Now, I would like to offer one practical suggestion concerning how to get such a law passed.

It takes money to get laws passed. Unless lobbyists are paid, bill drafts prepared, and position papers written and circulated, businesses and their owners can't effectively exercise their constitutional right to present their case to the legislature. In the usual case, no single business is willing to bear the burden alone. This means funding a war chest by passing the hat—with or without the involvement of a state association.

The business owner who is asked to write a check for $500 or $1,000 or more to support changing the law, will think of many questions. What will the bill say? Can we get it passed? How much will it cost to do this? Who will do the work? Who else will help fund the effort? What is everyone's fair share? How will the war chest be disbursed? How will we be informed of developments? Who will make the decisions?

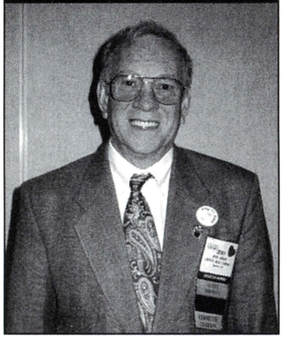
Some will be willing to provide this kind of money on just a handshake. Others, especially the larger and more structured businesses, must be given something in writing to respond to before they will join in sharing the financial burden. A strong state association can fulfill this requirement. Unfortunately, not all state associations are strong. Others, those strong enough, cannot muster the consensus necessary to provide the requisite leadership. As a result, where the redemption laws have been reformed, in more instances than you might expect, we have to thank a small handful of businesses willing to carry the entire load.

Collectively, coin-op amusement is a substantial industry. Redemption amusement is an important part of it. I can think of few industries of similar size that have allowed a law which is at the cornerstone of its regulation to reach such a state of disrepair. Why is this? I believe that at least part of the reason is that it is just too cumbersome for us to pool our assets to support effective participation in the lawmaking process.

Here is a suggestion which might make the job of asset pooling to support legislative reform a little easier: produce a form of written agreement for use by the person or group which is passing the hat for a war chest. The form provides a part of the written framework for cooperation among operators (and hopefully at least some of their suppliers) to find and govern an effort to reform a state's redemption law. It's called a trust. Any competent attorney can draft one, and it usually includes a purpose statement, subscriptions, duties of the trust, powers of the trustee, compensation of the trustee, situs and duration of the trust, a provision for the incapacity of the trustee, an interpretation clause, and an assignment statement.

(**Editor's note:** For a copy of a sample trust agreement, contact associate editor Steve White, (504)488-7003; fax (504)488-7083.) ▲

Tom Fricke, a St. Louis-based attorney who specializes in issues relating to the amusement games business, serves as a members of the IAFEC government relations committee and is a member of the International Amusement and Leisure Defense Association.



Vegas, Chicago, Orlando are tops in AMOA survey

What's your favorite convention city? AMOA went directly to its customers to find out. The answer to that question and others regarding the annual Expo may be a surprise.

JERRY DERRICK

Las Vegas was the unanimous first choice of sites for future AMOA annual expositions according to operators, distributors, and manufacturers responding to an AMOA site survey conducted in the spring of 1996.

After that—depending on one's role within the industry—it was a virtual dead heat race between Chicago, Orlando, Atlanta and San Francisco. But more on this later.

And, what's the most influential factor on attending Expo? After location, it's convenience of air travel, and overall travel costs. Local attractions, proximity to home and family activities were ranked the least important influencing factors. But for exhibitors, other important factors cited were union activity at the exhibit facility and labor rates.

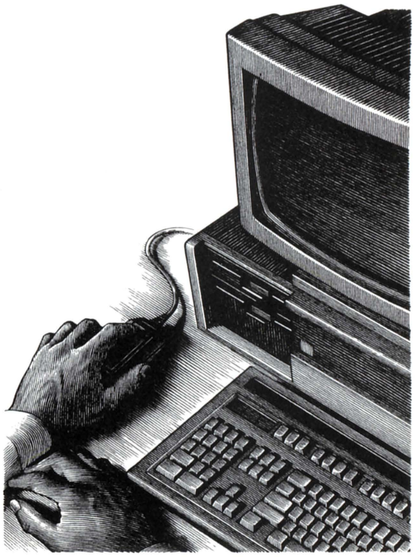
Each year AMOA's officers and staff receive their fair share of site recommendations for future expositions. Naturally, we can't go everywhere and, unfortunately, we can't please everyone.

However, this past spring we wanted to depend less on guesswork in our decision making and decided to send out a site selection survey to around 2,000 member companies and exhibitors. Of this figure, we received over 500 responses—an excellent 25 percent response rate if you're familiar with the rules of good statistical feedback.

As you might expect, the largest share of respondents (62 percent) were operators (321 respondents), followed by manufacturers (20 percent or 104 respondents) and 95 distributors, or 18 percent of respondents. Another nine percent—or 44 respondents—classified themselves as "other."

Here are other survey highlights:

- In 1995, 86 percent of respon-



> *"Eye-opening statistic: nearly 56 percent said gaming equipment was 'not very important' or 'of little importance.'"*

dents had attended AMOA's show in New Orleans. Fifty-eight percent attended the 1995 ACME show (recently renamed Amusement Showcase International); 26 percent attended the 1995 IAAPA show; and 21 percent attended the 1995 Fun Expo.

Given the fact that most respondents were AMOA members, it's not surprising that the other shows reflected lower attendance rates by those surveyed.

• In ranking *previous* AMOA exposition sites, Las Vegas ranked top with 74 percent of survey respondents rating it "excellent or good." Chicago—even though AMOA has not had a show in the Windy City since 1988—was second with 55 percent of respondents giving it an "excellent/good" rating. New Orleans (at 50 percent) and San Antonio (at 49 percent) were virtually tied in their "excellent/good" ratings.

• In terms of *potential* AMOA exposition sites, the top 10 cities cited overall by respondents were: 1) Las Vegas, 2) Chicago, 3) Orlando, 4) San Francisco, 5) Atlanta, 6) San Antonio, 7) San Diego, 8) New Orleans, 9) Nashville, and 10) Miami.

But...there was a slight difference of opinion among operators, distributors, and manufacturers responding to their favorite potential sites.

While Las Vegas was the unanimous first choice (by far) for all three, operators ranked Orlando their second choice and Chicago a close third, with San Francisco coming in fourth.

Distributors ranked Chicago second, San Francisco third, and Orlando fourth. All three were neck and neck. Manufacturers ranked Chicago second, Atlanta third, and Orlando fourth

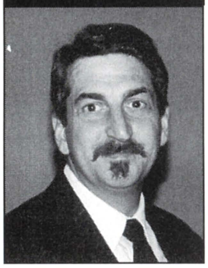
• Finally, gaming equipment on display at AMOA's annual shows might not be all that important to attendees. Asked about "the importance of gaming equipment in my decision to attend" AMOA's annual expositions, nearly 56 percent of respondents said it was "not very important" or "of little importance." Only 27 percent said it was "somewhat important" or "very important." The balance were not sure one way or another.

What do these survey results mean? They will certainly assist AMOA in scheduling future expositions. In 1997 we're committed to Atlanta (Oct. 23-25). In 1998, we already have commitments in Nashville (Sept. 17-19). However in 1999, as it now stands, we are planning to return to Chicago, based in part on these survey results. ▲

Expo site rankings

Industry members	#1	#2	#3	#4
Operators	Las Vegas	Orlando	Chicago	San Francisco
Distributors	Las Vegas	Chicago	San Francisco	Orlando
Manufacturers	Las Vegas	Chicago	Atlanta	Orlando

TECHNICAL
TOPICS



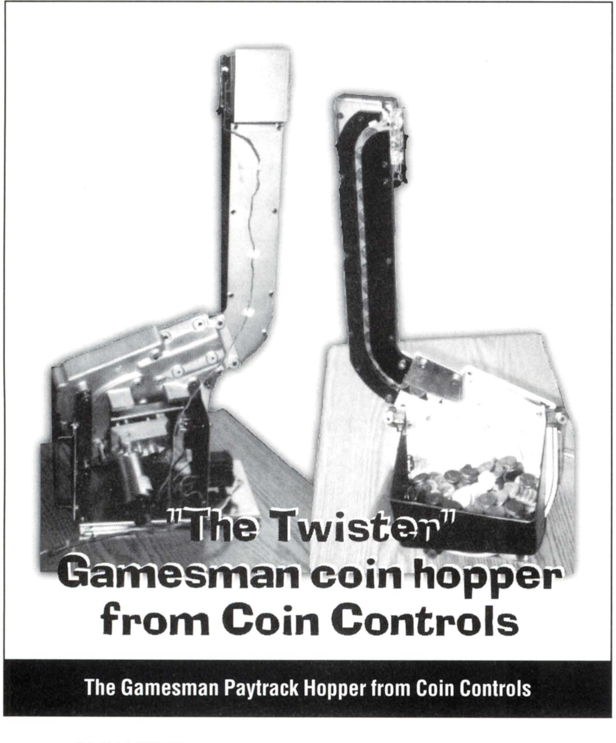
What's new at Wells-Gardner and Coin Controls

RANDY FROMM

I recently visited Indianapolis, Ind., for an IAMOA-sponsored tech class. We spent three days covering monitors and power supplies, including a hands-on power supply lab where we fixed dozens of bad power supplies. Congratulations to IAMOA for its leadership role in providing technical training for its members and a big thank you to Indy Amusements where the class was held.

On the way home to San Diego, I stopped in Chicago for a day of whirlwind factory tours courtesy of James Industries' Ray Fontana. My original intent was to cover three topics: Wells-Gardner's newly revamped and revitalized monitor assembly plant, Coin Controls' factory and new products, and the common link between them, sales representative James Industries.

In a classic example of one hand not knowing what the other is doing, I received my November issue of Play Meter following my visit. Lo and behold, we had a nice, six-page spread on James Industries beginning on page 74. So much for my original idea! It's a really great piece on Jim Roberts and his James Gang. I won't try to improve upon it or add anything to it here.



The Gamesman Paytrack Hopper from Coin Controls

Instead, let's take a look at two of James' success stories, monitor manufacturer Wells-Gardner and manufacturer of what is perhaps the most important part of any money-operated amusement machine (the way you get the money into the machine!) Coin Controls.

COIN CONTROLS

This was my first visit to Coin Controls' factory in Elk Grove Village, Ill. The assembly lines were buzzing with activity as the upbeat tempo of Latin rhythms set the pace. Although they were churning out coin doors like there was no tomorrow, I was there primarily to view two new products; both of which are suited to the gaming end of the amusement machine business.

The first was an electronic coin acceptor dubbed Condor. I didn't ask but when your business is the "coin door," all you have to do is to pull out a couple of vowels and, viola, you have a product name! The Condor series of electronic coin acceptors has been designed specifically for the international gaming machine industry. The unit is meant as an alternative to the industry standard.

The unit impressed me with its design and ability to reject frauds while keeping acceptance of genuine coins as close to 100 percent as possible. Condor uses four different sensors to detect diameter, thickness, and metallic content of coins and/or tokens. All of these sensors combine to determine the speed of the coin drop as well as the properties of the coin.

Condor accepts coins within the diameter range of 15 to 44.5 millimeters and thickness range of 1.5 to 3.75 millimeters. Its straight through design makes acceptance fast, fast, fast. Condor can detect coins or foreign objects being pulled back up the validator and an alarm signal is set off for a specific period of time. While the alarm is active, Condor will not accept any coins.

Upon power-up, Condor performs a self-test to look for blocked sensors and check its inductive coils. If there is a failure in any one of these areas the LED will flash red continuously and Condor will not accept any coins until the fault condition is corrected and power is removed and reapplied to the unit.

TEACH AND RUN PROGRAMMING

Programming Condor is a simple process. Unlike the Coin Comparitor which requires that a sample coin or token be permanently installed in the unit, Condor works by "learning" the signature of genuine coins.

The process is simple: use a small screwdriver to set the hex rotary switch to the number one position. Press the button and start feeding coins into the unit. When it has learned the signature of the coin, the LED turns green. Pressing the button again returns the mechanism to its normal mode.

The window of a coin or token can be narrowed or widened by the same hex switch in order to increase fraud rejection or true coin acceptance. Turning the switch clockwise narrows the window for increased fraud rejection. Counterclockwise adjustment widens the window to increase true coin acceptance.

Condor works on power supplies from +12 to +24 volts DC. Quiescent current draw is less than 70 milliamps. Peak current of around 500 milliamps occurs only when the accept solenoid is activated.

GAMESMAN PAYTRAK PAYOUT

As part of its aggressive attitude towards new business opportunities, Coin Controls implemented an intensive program of market research in the gaming sector. This exercise identified a strong requirement within the industry for alternative payout mechanisms.

Coin Controls talked to the leading gaming machine manufacturers and casino operators and took note of what the industry was saying. The result of all this research and the interchange of ideas is Gamesman and Gamesman Paytrak; both examples of product development in line with market requirements.

The Gamesman side exit hopper was designed to be backwards compatible with industry standard payouts in upright gaming machine configurations, so replacement of outdated units is simple and straightforward whereas Gamesman Paytrak, with its straight escalator system, was designed for the rapidly expanding slant top machine market.

The unique bowl profile of Gamesman ensures last coin payout. The bowl can be customized to meet the specific requirements of customer applications.

Other features include knife-free disk, dry friction bearing for permanent alignment, and a patented suspension system which greatly extends motor life. I saw this floating motor design at work during my factory tour. It's a great idea and should work well in tough gaming environments. Servicing is simplified by the extensive use of non coin-specific components and the easily accessible motor which can be disassembled from the disc in two to three minutes.

In designing Gamesman Paytrak, Coin Controls recognized the inherent problems of existing escalator systems. The patented Twister device and straight escalator system significantly reduce shingling and coin jams. Escalator extensions are available to facilitate individual customer needs.

Coin Controls' Ron Rollins commented: "Coin Controls' design team focused on the weakest points of the current hoppers in the market place today—the knife, the escalator, and the associated high maintenance costs. I believe that Gamesman and Gamesman Paytrak represent a significant step forward in hopper technology. I am certain that OEMs and casino operators in particular will quickly recognize the savings that Gamesman hoppers can bring to a casino slot department along with increased revenue from reduced downtime."

For further information, contact Coin Controls, 1850 Howard St., Elk Grove Village, IL 60007; (847)228-1810; fax (847)228-1833.

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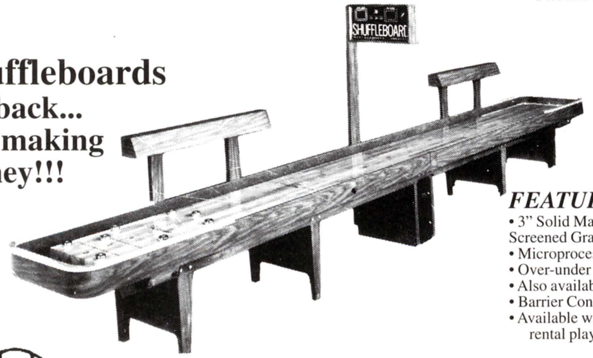
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Serial No.
00005049
Mfg. Date
14 August 1996
Model No.
CN101
Supply V
12-24 Volts
Coin Controls Inc. USA Tel: (1)847 228 1810
Coin Controls Ltd. UK Tel: (0)161 678 0111

Con Controls Condor Coin Acceptor

In the optical bonding room, Luvinia Thomas uses a patented mixture of clear epoxy resin and hardner to fill the gap between the Microtouch touch screen and the CRT. A powerful ultraviolet light then cures the mixture in just a few minutes.

Laurisa Reptowski, production supervisor at Wells-Gardner

WELLS-GARDNER

I've been to the Wells-Gardner factory a few times. Whenever the Arcade School was held in Chicago, the class would make an early morning rendezvous there for a quick tour. My previous visit was, to be honest, pretty disappointing. The line was barely in operation and the building itself was dark and gloomy, the predictable result of well over a half century of continuous operation without much in the way of refurbishment.

Not so now. Under the guidance of chairman and CEO Anthony Spier, Wells-Gardner has perked-up to the challenge of meeting the global needs of a more-or-less CRT-based world economy. In the words of its recent corporate report: Wells-Gardner Electronics Corp. is an ISO 9001 video products company that designs and manufactures color and monochrome video monitors for sale to the gaming, industrial, and commercial markets. It has a customer base that is growing both domestically and internationally.

Included are makers of coin-operated video games, lottery terminals, video slot machines, video walls and presentation monitors, automotive diagnostic and test equipment, kiosk, medical instruments, industrial process control equipment, and computer and word processing terminals. From time to time the company also engages in contract manufacturing of electronic products designed and marketed by others.

The company's game plan is to focus on market segments where its willingness and ability to semi-customize products, quick response time, and quality of service differentiate it from its competition. In turn, these strategies enable the company to establish defensible market niches.

Founded in 1925, Wells-Gardner is a publicly traded company and maintains its headquarters in Chicago.

America's number one video game monitor manufacturer has launched its newest model, the U3000. What's the difference between its previous model, the K7000, and the new U3000? Well, everything! The U3000 is a VGA monitor, built to fullfill new requirements. It's a completely new design, differing in every detail from the AC power input to the video output and virtually every circuit in-between.

The first change I noticed may seem laughable in light of all the major changes to follow, but it's important to me. The location of the 120 VAC power fuse has been changed from its almost completely inaccessible location underneath the front of the CRT to a convenient spot in the corner of the seperate power supply PCB, right near the 120 VAC power input connector.

This 3.15 amp, fast-blo fuse is now a small, 5mm x 20mm size. This is the same size fuse as found in most switching regulator power supplies and has become the world standard, replacing the larger 3AG size found in older monitors and other equipment. The fuse is mounted in a fuse holder on the printed circuit board.

NO ISOLATION TRANSFORMER REQUIRED.

Following the 120 VAC power input, we come to another change in the U3000. This new monitor uses a

W-G production supervisor Luis Toledo with CEO Anthony Spier

W-G CEO Anthony Spier

switch-mode power supply instead of a linear (also known as a conventional) power supply. The use of a switching supply eliminates the need for an isolation transformer and allows the U3000 to work on AC line voltages from 90 to 264 volts. This makes the U3000 a good monitor choice where the AC line voltage isn't constant.

The power supply is a straightforward PWM (pulse-width modulation) design using a PWM integrated circuit (type UC3842AN) that drives a single FET (SSP6N60) in a flyback-type circuit.

Technician's note: As with virtually all switching power supplies, the primary side of the power supply is connected directly to the 120 volt AC line. Never connect any part of the primary circuit to earth ground. Grounding the live primary circuit (through either an oscilloscope ground or the grounded tip of a soldering station) WILL cause some serious fireworks.

There`s a neat way to use an incandescent light bulb when troubleshooting monitors. Specifically, the bulb can be used to test the monitor's B+ power supply for proper operation. The U3000 power supply includes Over-Current Protection or OCP. In fact, all monitors that use a switching regulator power supply have an OCP circuit. The OCP circuit shuts down the B+ power supply when it detects a short on the B+ supply line. Anything that causes an over-current condition can trigger the OCP and shut down the power supply. Naturally the symptom is: dead monitor. B+ power supply measures 0 volts. But what is the cause of the problem? Is the B+ power supply bad or has the OCP been triggered, shutting down the power supply?

Isolating the B+ power supply from the rest of the monitor circuitry is easy in the U3000. Just pull the plug off of connector CN104. This alone is not enough to verify proper power supply operation. In order to test a power supply, it must have a load. Here`s how to test the monitor's B+ power supply by using an ordinary 40 watt light bulb as a dummy load:

1. Power off!
2. Disconnect CN104.
3. Use a clip leads (jumpers) to connect a 40 watt, incandescent lamp between pins 1 and 3 of CN104.
4. Power on! Does the lamp light? If so, the power supply is good. You can also measure (and adjust if necessary) the B+ voltage at this time. It should be 119 Volts DC.

Following the trend to use higher resolution displays for video games, the U3000 is a VGA compatible monitor with a horizontal sync frequency of 31.5 khz. As covered in the November issue of Play Meter Magazine (page 169) this monitor is not compatible with standard resolution NTSC monitors with a horizontal sync rate of 15,734 hz.

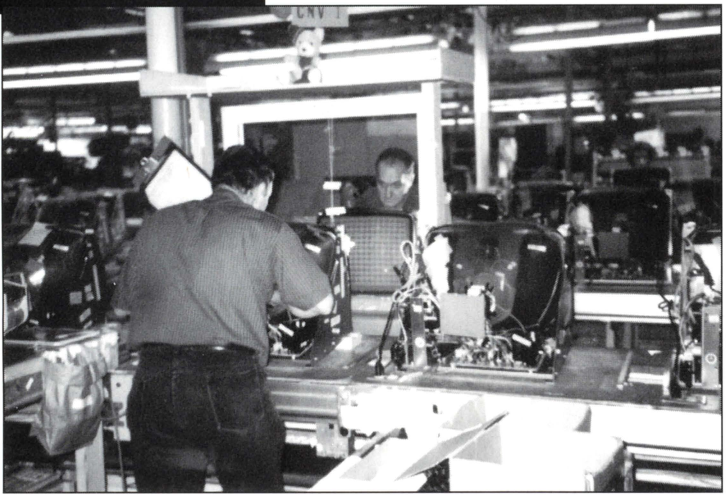
Speaking of horizontal deflection circuits, operators will be pleased to note that the U3000 now has a horizontal size potentiometer in addition to a width coil. Everyone hates the width coil because it requires a special plastic tool to adjust it, the coil is easily broken because it gets hot and brittle with age, and because it really doesn't work all that well.

The range of a width coil in determining the horizontal size of the picture is pretty limited, often leaving operators with a picture that doesn't fill the screen from left to right even with the adjustment set to maximum ; the "slug" fully withdrawn from the coil. On the other hand, the width control potentiometer in the U3000 has plenty of range for adjusting the width of the picture to suit both domestic and imported game boards.

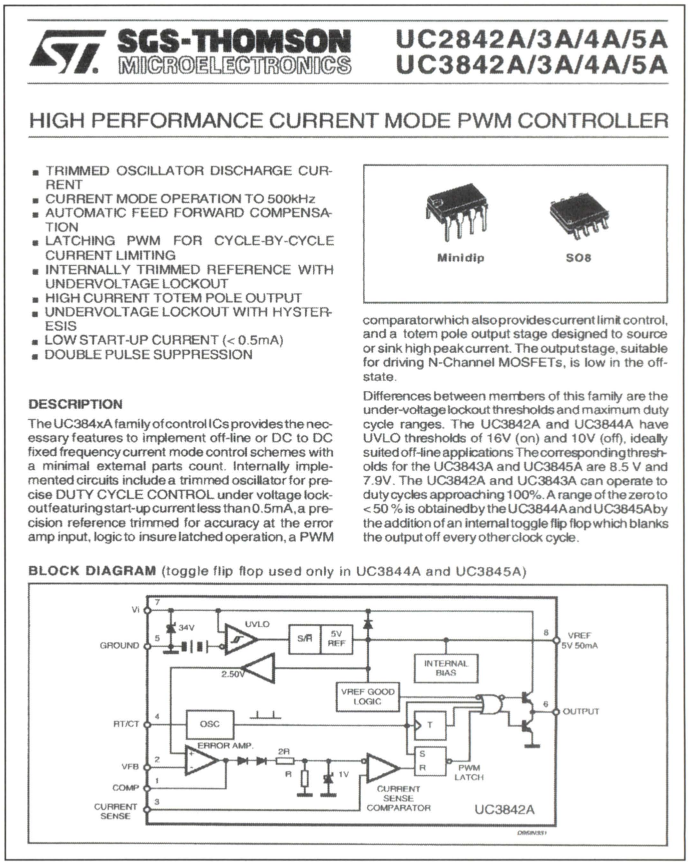
On another happy note, the horizontal size control is mounted on the remote adjustments board along with controls for the vertical centering, vertical size, horizontal delay (position) brightness and contrast. The flip side is the extremely poor placement of the vertical hold and vertical frequency potentiometers (usually one and the same but two, individual potentiometers here) located in the middle of the chassis, directly beneath the CRT.

These potentiometers must be adjusted with the power on and getting to these two pots with a tool is practically impossible. This leaves you with the only available option of thrusting your hand into the middle of the live chassis and turning the tiny potentiometers with your finger and thumb. Nerve-racking at first but doable after you've done it a few times without shocking the heck out of yourself. I didn't get shocked, anyway.

For video games that use a mirror to display the monitor, the scan has to be reversed. Reversed scan might also be required for a vertically mounted monitor. In other monitors, this requires cutting the deflection yoke connector apart to reverse one or both of



Things are really humming at the Wells-Gardner factory!



SGS-THOMSON
MICROELECTRONICS

UC2842A/3A/4A/5A
UC3842A/3A/4A/5A

HIGH PERFORMANCE CURRENT MODE PWM CONTROLLER

- TRIMMED OSCILLATOR DISCHARGE CURRENT
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- AUTOMATIC FEED FORWARD COMPENSATION
- LATCHING PWM FOR CYCLE-BY-CYCLE CURRENT LIMITING
- INTERNALLY TRIMMED REFERENCE WITH UNDERVOLTAGE LOCKOUT
- HIGH CURRENT TOTEM POLE OUTPUT
- UNDERVOLTAGE LOCKOUT WITH HYSTERESIS
- LOW START-UP CURRENT (< 0.5mA)
- DOUBLE PULSE SUPPRESSION

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DESCRIPTION

The UC384xA family of control ICs provides the necessary features to implement off-line or DC to DC fixed frequency current mode control schemes with a minimal external parts count. Internally implemented circuits include a trimmed oscillator for precise DUTY CYCLE CONTROL under voltage lockout featuring start-up current less than 0.5mA, a precision reference trimmed for accuracy at the error amp input, logic to insure latched operation, a PWM comparator which also provides current limit control, and a totem pole output stage designed to source or sink high peak current. The output stage, suitable for driving N-Channel MOSFETs, is low in the off-state.

Differences between members of this family are the under-voltage lockout thresholds and maximum duty cycle ranges. The UC3842A and UC3844A have UVLO thresholds of 16V (on) and 10V (off), ideally suited off-line applications The corresponding thresholds for the UC3843A and UC3845A are 8.5 V and 7.9V. The UC3842A and UC3843A can operate to duty cycles approaching 100%. A range of the zero to < 50 % is obtained by the UC3844A and UC3845A by the addition of an internal toggle flip flop which blanks the output off every other clock cycle.

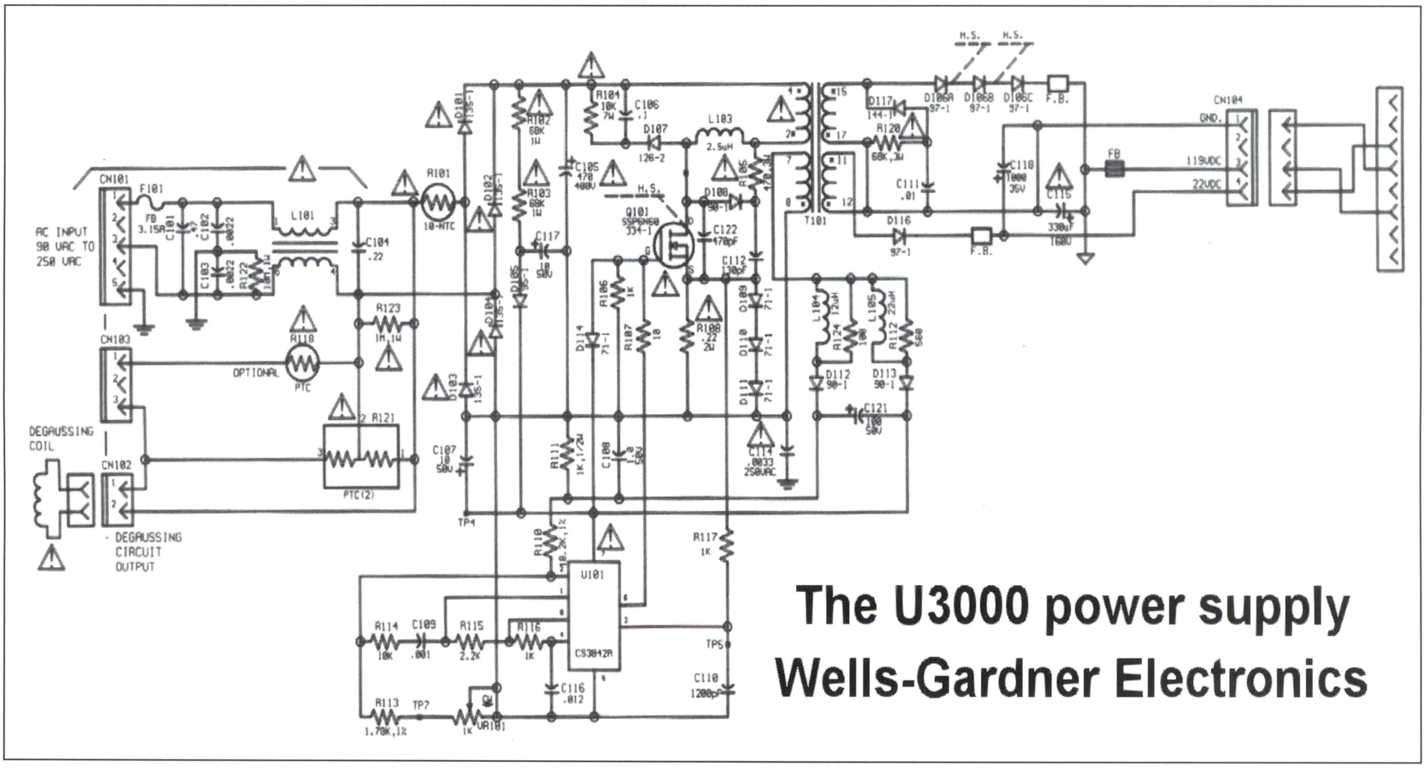
BLOCK DIAGRAM (toggle flip flop used only in UC3844A and UC3845A)

Vi
7
GROUND
5
34V
UVLO
S/R
5V REF
8
VREF
5V 50mA
2.50V
INTERNAL BIAS
VREF GOOD LOGIC
RT/CT
4
OSC
T
6
OUTPUT
ERROR AMP.
VFB
2
2R
R
1V
S
R
PWM LATCH
COMP
1
CURRENT SENSE
3
CURRENT SENSE COMPARATOR
UC3842A
D95IN331

the connector pairs. The U3000 has separate connectors for the horizontal deflection coil and vertical deflection coil of the deflection yoke, making cutting unnecessary. The yoke connectors have also been placed in easily accessible locations on the printed circuit board. This is a vast improvement over the K7000 where the yoke connector was almost impossible to get to.

High voltage regulation has been enhanced in the U3000 by the use of a special high voltage capacitor that's included inside the monitor's high voltage unit. High voltage regulation is important to prevent blooming when the picture makes rapid transitions from dark to light. Another improvement in the high voltage unit is a new, ringless flyback transformer that eliminates ringing on the left edge of the picture.

The U3000 even includes a little bit of digital circuitry in the form of a 74S86 exclusive-or gate, a 74LS156 demultiplexer, and a 74LS123 dual, monostable multivibrator (I'm not making this stuff up, folks!). These ICs are part of the new sync input circuit.



CN101
F101
FB 3.15A
AC INPUT 90 VAC TO 250 VAC
C101 .47
C102 .0022
C103 .0022
R122 10M,1W
L101
C104 .22
R101 10-NTC
CN103
R118
OPTIONAL
PTC
R123 1M,1W
DEGAUSSING COIL
CN102
R121
PTC(2)
DEGAUSSING CIRCUIT OUTPUT
D101 135-1
D102 135-1
D103 135-1
D104 135-1
D105 95-1
R102 68K 1W
R103 68K 1W
C105 470 400V
C117 10 50V
C107 10 50V
TP4
R104 10K 7W
C106 .1
D107 126-2
L103 2.5uH
H.S.
Q101 SSP6N60 334-1
D108 90-1
R105 470,3W
C122 470pF
C112 130pF
D114 71-1
R106 1K
R107 10
R108 .22 2W
D109 71-1
D110 71-1
D111 71-1
R111 1K,1/2W
C108 1.0 50V
C114 .0033 250VAC
R110 10.2K,1%
U101
CS3842A
R114 10K
C109 .001
R115 2.2K
R116 1K
C116 .012
R113 1.78K,1%
TP7
1K
VR101
R117 1K
TP5
C110 1200pF
T101
H.S.
H.S.
D117 144-1
D106A 97-1
D106B 97-1
D106C 97-1
F.B.
R120 68K,3W
C111 .01
D116 97-1
F.B.
C118 1000 35V
C115 330uF 160V
FB
CN104
GND.
119VDC
22VDC
L104 12uH
R124 100
L105 22uH
R112 560
D112 90-1
D113 90-1
C121 100 50V

The U3000 power supply
Wells-Gardner Electronics

The sync circuit will accept sync of any polarity or type: negative, positive, and composite.

The video circuit is completely new as well. The video bandwidth has been increased to 25 MHz. The increase has come about through the use of a new video processor chip (National Semiconductor type LM 1203) and a new, two transistor video output stage. This increase provides the U3000 with enhanced video response resulting in a crisper picture. Video inputs are now 75 ohm, .7 volt peak-to-peak, conforming to the standard set by the computer industry. As experienced technicians will recall, a "standard" video game monitor has an input impedance of 1k to 4.7 k ohms and about 4 volts peak-to-peak video level.

Changes in the video circuit also keep the color temperature constant as the contrast is adjusted. The red, green, and blue channels now track within 1 dB of each other over the entire contrast control range. Also, the "black level clamping" has been improved so that the black background will not vary with changes in contrast.

During my visit to the Wells-Gardner factory, it was mentioned that as part of its commitment to quality and in the interest of maintaining its ISO 9000 compliance, all monitors are now burned-in at 220 volts AC rather than the 110 volt setup used to power the model K7000 and that the rate of factory fallouts (monitors that fail during their initial power-up and subsequent burn-in) had dropped from about eight percent to three percent.

W-G CEO Anthony Spier credits his production team for accomplishing the marked turnaround in production quality. I credit Mr. Spier for his ability to light a fire under the W-G staff through his dynamic personality and keen business acumen.

For further information, contact Wells-Gardner Electronics Corp., 2701 N. Kildare Ave., Chicago, IL 60639; (312)252-8220; or fax (312)252-8072.

That's all for now. I'm off to Germany for a few weeks to do some training for the U.S. Army. They have a couple of amusement game and gaming programs for the entertainment of service personnel abroad as well as here in the United States. By the time you read this, however, I'll be back in the States, doing that voodoo that you do too!

I should be on-line at my new, (hopefully) permanent home in cyberville. Look for me at (RandyFromm.com). Clever, huh? (all the good names have been taken already...darn!)

As usual, if you have any questions or comments, I can be reached at 1944 Falmouth Dr., El Cajon, CA 92020; (619)593-6131; fax (619)593-6132; (randyfromm.com), (aim@thegroup.net), (coinop@ix.netcom.com). See you at the Arcade school! ▲

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LARRY MUNDAY

Q.S.M., Inc. (Quality Systems Manufacturing, Inc.) has designed a retrofit kit for Capcom's *PB2000 Photo Booth* they call the 4-UP. The 4-UP will take four individual poses per picture vend and should drastically improve your photo vend earnings.

Q.S.M. offers two retrofit options, and both are reasonably priced.

With Option A you would remove the existing camera and main PCB and replace it with a new camera top and main PCB. This is very simple to do, and I will explain the procedure in detail. The Option A retrofit kit sells for $470 with a $135 credit when the old main PCB is returned, bringing the final cost to $335. This option will give you less down time and faster, increased vend yield. Once my retrofit was complete, I saw an increase of 20 percent in sales the first week and an overall increase of 35 percent.

Option B requires a little more down time than Option A. You would have to send the loader, camera, and main PCB to Q.S.M. The company will inspect, test, repair if needed, and install the retrofit kit. Q.S.M. says that all units are shipped back within 48 hours of receipt and they will provide a 90-day warranty (parts and labor) on the loader, camera, and main PCB. This option sells for $395 plus the cost for any authorized repair parts and minimal labor. Once the parts are returned to you, you need only to place them back into the booth.

> ***"Once my retrofit was complete, I saw an increase of 20 percent in sales the first week and an overall increase of 35 percent."***

Once the retrofit installation is complete, 4-UP photos will have four individual poses taken with four "take picture" button presses per one photo vend. Between poses the "take picture" button will reactivate after a 20-second delay to recharge the photo strobe.

As promised, here are the simple instructions for installing Option A. The following procedure assumes the photo booth is operational and adjusted properly:

1. Turn on your photo booth. Using the reload and free vend buttons, verify all functions are normal by taking a picture. Using the elevator toggle switch, lower the elevator after the photo is ejected.
2. Turn off the power to the system. Carefully remove the camera assembly and main PCB. Remove the 5.3 system EPROMs and put them in a safe place. Remove the camera assembly from the loader by loosening the retaining screws and sliding the camera toward you.
3. Place the main PCB in the protective bag supplied with the retrofit kit and place in the shipping box. Label the box with the RMA number provided by Q.S.M., and return for credit.
4. Verify that the dip switch vend setting is to the same setting as on

the old main PCB. Install the 4-UP main PCB, securing it in place with the block previously removed. Install the new camera cable at the main PCB connector and run the cable along the main harness up to the loader. Secure the cable to the main harness at each end with four-inch tie wraps.

5. Place the original camera assembly on a soft clean work area. Remove the four panhead Phillips screws securing the camera bottom to the camera top (located on the under side of the camera bottom). Set the original camera top aside.

6. Install the new 4-UP camera top on top of the camera bottom, using the same screws. Tighten until snug.

7. Remove the seven-segment display PCB from your original camera top and install on the standoffs to the left of the 4-UP camera top using the hardware provided.

8. Install your 4-UP camera assembly into the loader camera bracket, sliding the camera along the right side of the bracket until it stops. Verify it is touching the right rear set screw. If the 4-UP camera is hitting the elevator bracket and cannot slide in far enough to touch the set screw, move on to step 9. If it is touching the set screw, move on to step 13.

"The 4-UP will take four individual poses per picture vend and should drastically improve your photo vend earnings."

9. Remove the four screws securing the loader assembly to the wood shelf. Disconnect the main harness loader connector and remove the loader from the shelf.

10. Loosen the four screws securing the elevator assembly to the bottom plate of the loader.

11. Slide the elevator assembly away from the front of the loader (picture-eject side) to obtain a 0.075-inch gap between the front of the elevator and the back side of the loader camera bracket for precision loaders and the back of the vertical side for sheet metal loaders. Tighten the four previously loosened screws at this position. Verify the elevator can raise and lower unrestricted.

12. Reinstall the loader assembly onto the shelf and secure using the screws previously removed.

13. Connect the four connectors to the camera assembly, making sure the shutter connector is connected to the new camera cable 9-pin connector.

14. Turn on the power to the system and verify that the seven-segment display and the film sense LED light up in normal operation. Using the manual film reload switch, process a film pack up in the camera. Verify that the film pack loads and the dark slide ejects properly.

Your 4-UP camera is ready for its first vend. Press the free vend button or coin the machine up and get ready to smile.

If you would like to order a 4-UP retrofit kit from Q.S.M., contact Therese Collins at (800)699-2115. The address is 1051 Serpentine Lane, Suite 500, Pleasanton, CA 94566. ▲

WHAT'S NEW

ROLL-A-BALL
ROLL-A-BALL

Photos from top: BARREL OF FUN

CENTER VERTICAL WATER GAME

MONKEY DROP

RING 'EM UP

VERTICAL ROLL-A-BALL

Bob's Space Racers introduces five new additions to its extensive line of novelty games: *Barrel of Fun, Center Vertical Water Game, Monkey Drop, Ring 'Em Up,* and *Vertical Roll-A-Ball.*

With easily understandable play features, *Barrel of Fun* is a kiddie game that keeps young players coming back again and again. The object of the game is to toss balls into open holes of a barrel. The more balls players get into the barrel the more tickets they receive.

The *Center Vertical Water Game* comes in park and trailer models and has advanced digital and electronic technology designed and tested for day-to-day operation. The game's race toys, which move up the neon trimmed vertical track, can be replaced along with new colors and lights to retheme the unit, giving it a new look for less than the cost of a new game.

Monkey Drop comes as a single compact unit or can be purchased in groups which can be arranged to fit any operation. It has an adjustable ticket dispenser and coin mech, and can be set for varying difficulty levels. Using two grabber handles, players attempt to catch bananas and prize cards, the value of which determine the game's ticket payout.

Ring 'Em Up challenges players to flip coins into a cash drawer as it opens and closes; flashing lights on the cash register keep changing values so players continue trying for the highest score. The game features advanced digital technology and sound.

Vertical Roll-A-Ball delivers all the fun and excitement of the company's traditional *Roll-A-Ball* while being adaptable to several space-saving configurations. It comes in both park and trailer models. Game play involves a race toy climbing a vertical track trimmed in glowing neon.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Bob's Space Racers, 427 15th St., Daytona Beach, FL 32117; (904)677-0761; fax (904)677-0794.

WHAT'S NEW

ULTIMATE II - WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FOOTBALL

Eighty of the top soccer playing countries from around the world assemble to see who can bring home the ultimate glory of winning the World Cup with SNK's Neo-Geo release *Ultimate 11--World Championship Football.*

The game is enhanced with bigger character sprites, tighter controls, and the new patented Excite Gauge. Soccer fans will cheer a number of the game's features including the 80-player team roster and four selective strategies available (balanced, offensive, defensive, and technical). These allow players to customize a team.

Working in tandem with the Excite Gauge, these strategies also produce super plays and passing combinations that will outdo any opponent. Adding realism to the game is a 3-D field feature that shifts the perspective when the ball is advanced into an opponent's side.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact SNK Corp. of America, 20603 Earl St., Torrance, CA 90503; (310)371-7100; fax (310)371-0969.

PITCHER'S DUEL

Innovative Concepts in Entertainment and Interactive Light announce the launch of *Pitcher's Duel,* the next generation expansion of the joint-venture sports simulator *Power Home Run Derby.*

The new addition, which was debuted at IAAPA '96, lets a second player stand behind the batter and control a realistic major league 3-D pitcher. *Power Home Run Derby* and *Pitcher's Duel* are endorsed by Louisville Slugger under an agreement recently signed with Interactive Light, the games' developer.

With *Pitcher's Duel,* the second player can pitch fast balls, breaking balls, and change-ups to the inside, outside, high, and low, with full control of pitch speed. It can be purchased in either dedicated or expansion formats. The dedicated unit comes with cabinet, cage, pitching podium, and accessories. The expansion unit allows operator who have either *Home Run Derby* or *Power Home Run Derby* to add the new game.

The expansion package includes a 3Dfx Voodoo Graphics enhanced computer, game software, an advanced sensor, and pitching podium. The expansion software will allow for three contests within one game: single player, two player Long Ball, and two player Slugfest.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Innovative Concepts in Entertainment, 10123 Main St., Clarence, N.Y.; (716)759-0370; fax (716)759-0390.

Acclaim/Lazer-Tron announces the release of *Stack-Em!,* which features the classic features of a traditional alley bowler game as well as a unique backwall design previously unseen on such games.

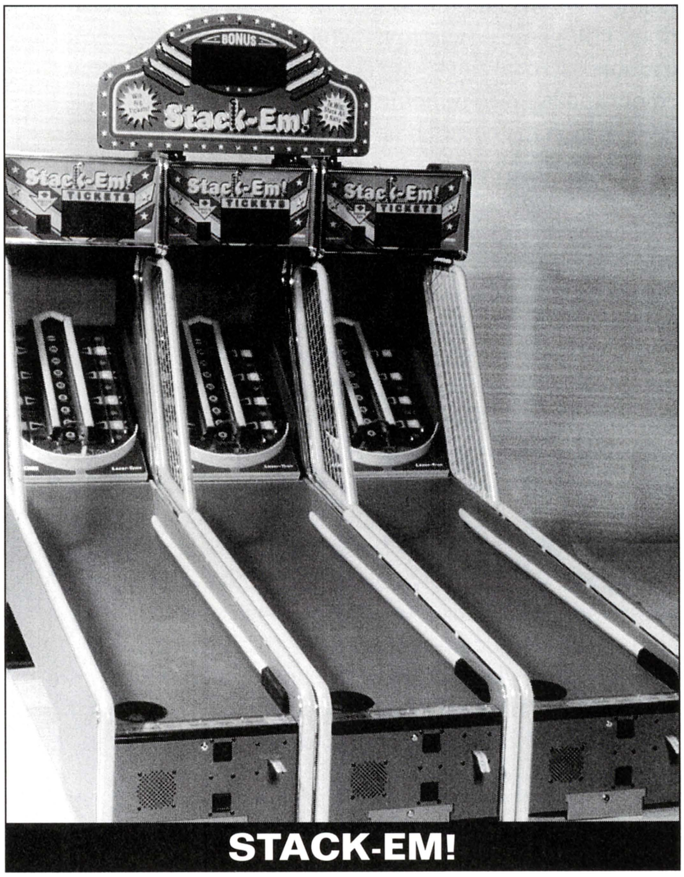
Players roll the small wooden balls up a 10" alley in an attempt to stack each ball in the center target area. The more balls they stack, the more tickets they win. While it's easy to stack the first few balls, the task increases in difficulty as the game continues.

Balls are launched off the ramp up onto the backwall and hopefully will land in the center stack as a winner. The stacked balls stay in place throughout the game providing a rewarding visual for players.

Each game consists of rolling nine balls, and the progressive jackpot can be won by stacking all nine balls. *Stack-Em!* will allow players to play up to 10 credits in a single game, each of which increases the ticket payout proportionally.

The new backwall design prevents the ball from ever touching the backboard, thus allowing the game's artwork and lighting features to create a dazzling effect. The cabinet is constructed of plywood and steel, and the game features a one-year warranty along with a 4,000 capacity ticket dispenser, separate locking cashbox, and only two moving internal parts.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Acclaim/Lazer-Tron, 4430 Willow Road, Pleasonton, CA 94588; (510)460-0873; fax (510)460-0365.



STACK-EM!

WHAT'S NEW

TOUCHMASTER UPGRADE

Midway Games announces a major software upgrade to *Touchmaster,* a state-of-the-art touch screen video game. Pyramid 13s, Five Star Generals, and 3 Peak Perfection have been added to *Touchmaster*'s lineup of games.

Pyramid 13s and 3 Peak Perfection are both card games. In the first, players race against the clock to climb the pyramid of cards by choosing card combinations that add up to 13. 3 Peak Perfection challenges players to climb three peaks of cards by selecting cards sequentially higher or lower than the card dealt.

In addition to the software upgrades, Midway will also be providing tournament and network options for *Touchmaster* to allow operators new opportunities. First on the list is a new NANI-compatible version of the game that is being tested.

The company will also be introducing a tournament package that will allow operators to run tournaments on non-networked games. The package will include comprehensive bookkeeping and support materials, prize verification, and rules and adjustments.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Midway Games, 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (312)961-1000; fax (312)961-1791.

SESAME STREET KIDDIE RIDES

Copy Right Kiddie Rides has contracted with Amutec to manufacture the Sesame Street series of kiddie rides which Copy Right has licensed.

The first three rides feature Big Bird, Bert & Ernie, and Oscar the Grouch. A Cookie Monster ride is coming soon. The characters welcome children with arms extended around the child's seat. All rides in the series are gel-coated for durability.

Besides providing a fun ride for youngsters, each unit has an educational side: Big Bird teaches the ABCs; Bert & Ernie is a singalong with the theme song from the "Sesame Street" program; and Ocsar the Grouch appropriately talks about the value of recycling. The Cookie Monster ride will focus on shape recognition.

The rides, which are popular in the United Kingdom and Australia, are now available in Europe and the United States. Copy Right has been in business for five years.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Copy Right Rides, Holt Hall, Holt Lane, Matlock, Derbyshire, DEA 3LY, United Kingdom; 44 (0)1629 760388; fax 44 (0)1629 760399.

SPACE JAM

Sega Pinball presents *Space Jam,* which is based on the holiday season film release from Warner Bros. starring Bugs Bunny and his Looney Tunes pals along with Chicago Bulls superstar Michael Jordan.

In order to win their freedom from a super spaced-out villain, Bugs and crew must defeat a team of scrawny aliens in a game of basketball. This sounds simple until Bugs discovers that their opponents have changed into a group of oversized basketball powerhouses. Their only hope is Michael Jordan.

In its apparition as a pinball game, players actually become Michael Jordan and drive their lane to make basket after basket. *Space Jam* features a scoring system that tracks both regular pinball points and points scored through the hoop. Two- and three-point shots are always available.

Every time players complete the required number of ramp shots, they are suddenly on fire with each basket worth a backboard-busting 10 points. Players also collect bonus features as they pass basketball scoring thresholds.

In addition, pin game players will find themselves reaching high for the jump ball, a dual-exit vertical up kicker that can deliver the ball back to either flipper. The game provides intelligent assists setting players up for a fast break, three-pointer, or slam dunk.

Space Jam is the first game to feature the Sega Showcase backbox, with all metal construction that gives the game a state-of-the-art look, as well as a four-color art package and custom speech by Jordan, Chicago Bulls stadium announcer, and all of the Looney Tunes favorites.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Sega Pinball, 1990 Janice Park Ave., Melrose Park, IL 60160; (708)345-7700; fax (708)345-7718.

GHOST TRAIN

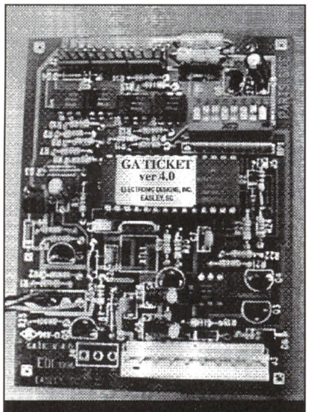
American Sammy presents *Ghost Train,* a skill stop game in which players try to stop the spinning wheels with three buttons.

Ghost Train
WIN 500 TICKETS

The game also features a bonus round of rotating lights to increase the chances of winning, and its haunted house theme makes the game fun to play for all ages.

This one-player ticket redemption game is housed in a mini-upright cabinet requiring little floor space. Dimensions are 20" wide x 25-1/4" deep x 63-1/2" high. The game weighs 165 pounds.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact American Sammy Corp., 901 Cambridge Dr., Elk Grove Village, IL 60007; (847)364-9787; fax (847)364-9831.



GATIC TICKET BOARD

Electronic Designs presents its Gatic printed circuit board which converts any video poker or 8-liner-style game to a redemption ticket output machine.

The Gatic board gives only one ticket per game played; all owed tickets are kept in an escrow account. After receiving the first ticket, free bonus credits allow one more hand to be played so the player can receive another ticket. If no tickets are in escrow, no free bonus credits are given. A lamp output light indicates when tickets are held in escrow.

The board is designed with programmable dip switches which control the number of credits per ticket and allow the unit to accumulate or return credits to the game over the ticket amount. Operators need only select the game type, and the Gatic will automatically return the correct amount of credits to the screen. An electromechanical meter may be added to monitor return credits.

Features include an auto ticket reload which tracks all owed tickets if the dispenser runs empty, optoisolators to protect the PCB from static electricity, and a collect-ticket or runoff switch lockout. It comes preharnessed for quick installation into Deltronic DL-1275 or compatible ticket dispenser.

For more information, contact Electronic Designs, P.O. Box 1041, Easley, SC 29641; (864)855-4100; fax (864)855-2507; e-mail (franklin@globavision.net).

PRICE GUIDE '97

Using data compiled from across the industry, Price Guide '97 will provide an accurate look at the values of equipment and parts. It will be published six times a year.

The format will differ from what many are accustomed to using, substituting price characterizations of low and high for the currently used "as is" and "recond." This will avoid using improper interpretations of data when collecting it from different regions of the country and looking at equipment in varying conditions.

Videos, pinballs, countertops, redemption, and shuffle games are going to be listed in each category in alphabetical order with the manufacturer shown after the game. Jukeboxes, pool tables, and darts will be listed under the respective manufacturers.

The guide will also have a section on the current value of parts and supplies, gathered from sales flyers, invoices, and surveys. Additional features will include tips on route management, service bulletins, league play, and what's hot.

For more information, contact Bob Graves or Catherine Baker at Price Guide '97, P.O. Box 16644, Plantation, FL 33318; (954)382-9333; fax (888)476-4555.

ACCUDATA LINK

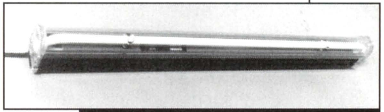
Goal Industries presents AccuData Link, which will give operators a chance to see how any one of their machines is performing at any given moment in real-time figures without having to wire each machine.

The new technology uses existing power lines or radio frequency to transmit data to a remote location. AccuData will let operators know if a machine is malfunctioning.

At any given time operators will be able to check on how much money is in the machine, if the cash door is open, if the service door is open, if dollars are deposited, if ticket levels are low or depleted.

Other features will allow an operator to turn on or off any individual machine, issue a free credit, reset in case of a lock-up, check the number of coins or tokens in a hopper, see how much money is in the stacker, and remotely test the bill return.

For more information, contact Goal Industries, P.O. Box 2030, Beaufort, S.C. 29901; (803)524-4625; fax (803)524-4626.



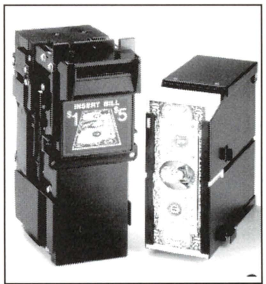
DECONEON

Doyle Trading Group presents DecoNeon, a decorative neon lighting system utilizing glass tubes, a transformer, and wiring, all of which are totally shielded from human contact. Stock colors include red, blue, green, purple, pink, yellow, and white.

Standard fixtures are 45" long, U.L. listed for indoor and outdoor applications, and approved for use in high traffic areas as well as low elevation applications, usually without permits. Special effects such as chasing and flashing can be added to applications.

DecoNeon is designed to withstand abuse and extreme weather conditions and vibration like those produced on amusement rides. The average life is three to five years.

For more information, contact Doyle Trading Group, P.O. Box 3711, Sarasota, FL 34230; (941)358-835; fax (941)355-0120; e-mail (HIGA-DEV@worldnet.att.net).



ARDAC CURRENCY VALIDATORS

Capital Vending is now offering the Ardac line of currency validators. These validators are available for many applications such as vending, jukeboxes, and gaming.

A large selection of parts, service manuals, and various models are stocked for shipment. In addition to technical advice, several service bulletins are available at no charge.

For applications that require four-way acceptance and the validation of higher denomination notes the DBA5 model is available. This model offers high security against counterfeits, removable bill magazine, and the ability to use an upstacker or downstacker. This validator is ideal for gaming applications as it will accept $1 to $20 notes. Capital Vending offers a six month money back evaluation period on this acceptor.

For more information, contact Capital Vending, 13581 Virginia Manor Road, Laurel, MD 20707; (301)419-3189 or (800)814-7756; fax (301)419-3661. ▲

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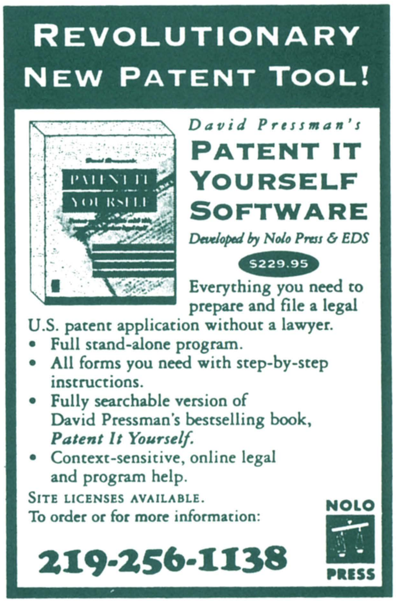

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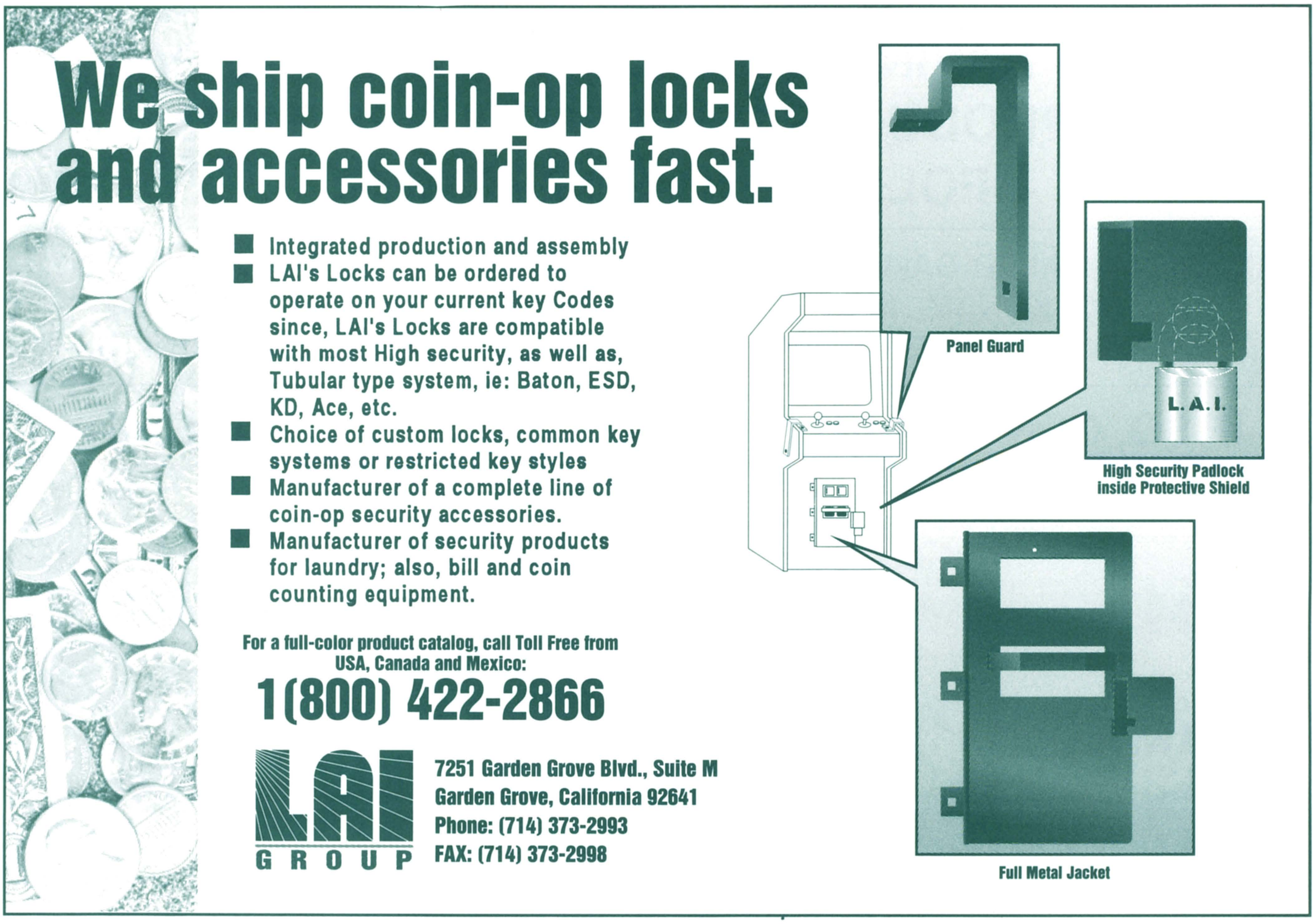

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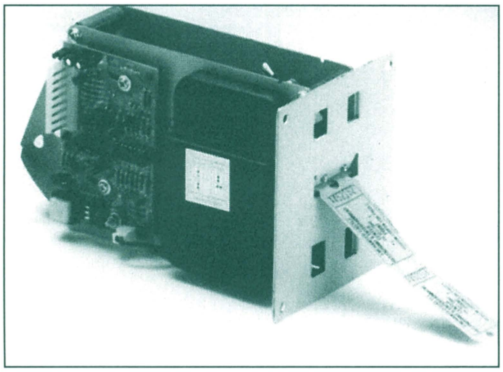

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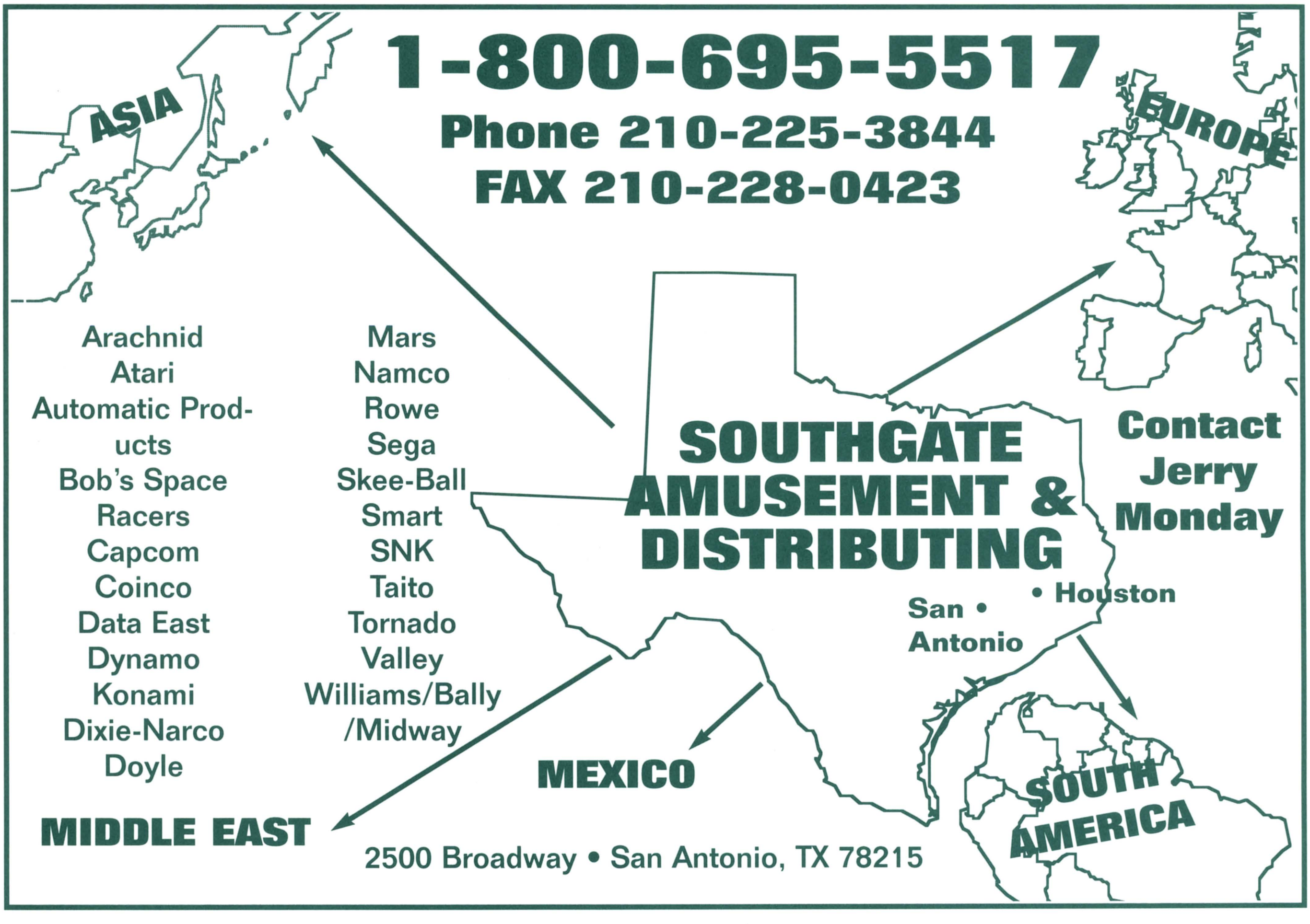

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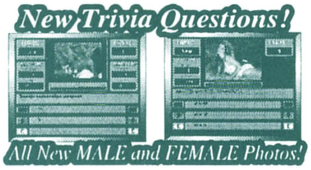

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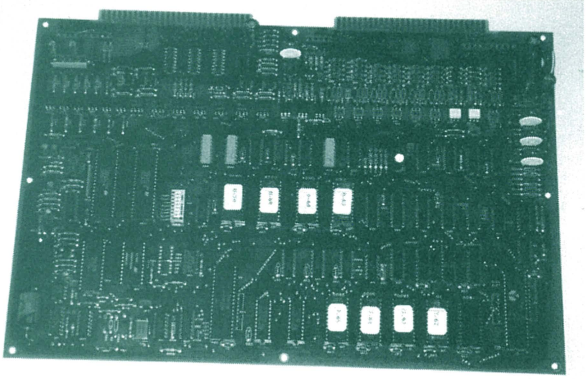

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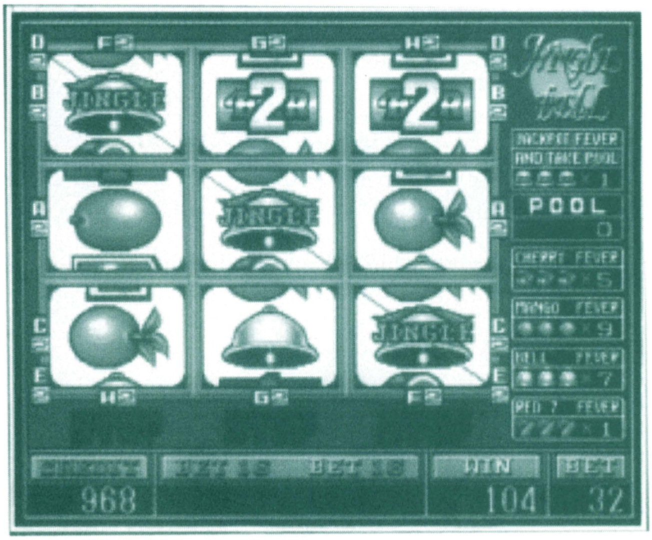
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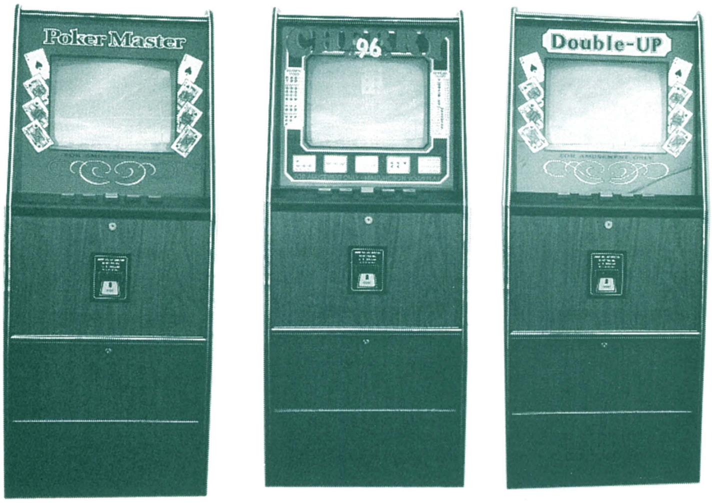
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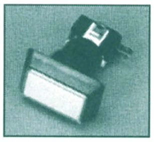

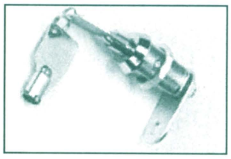

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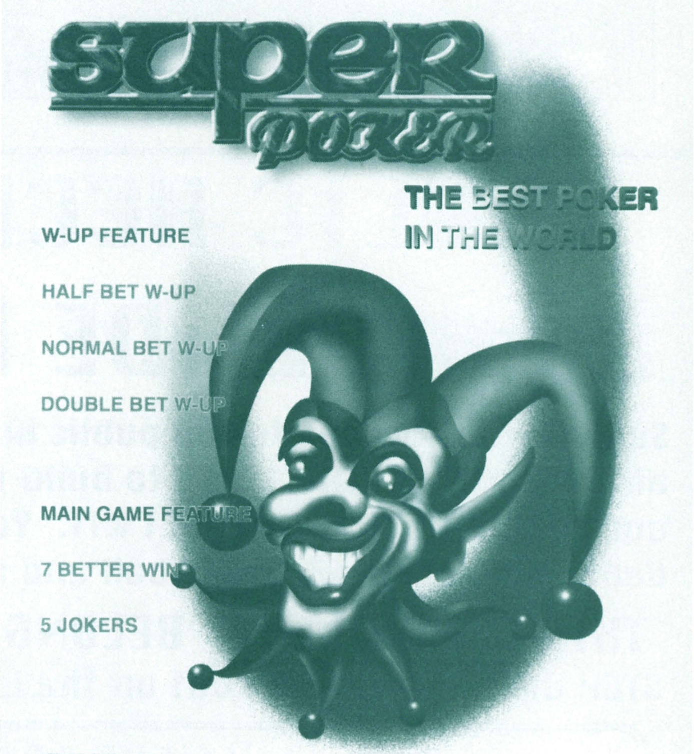

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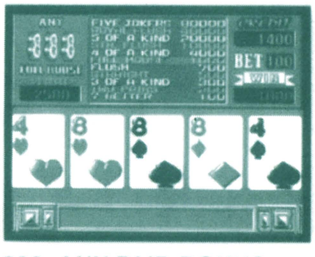

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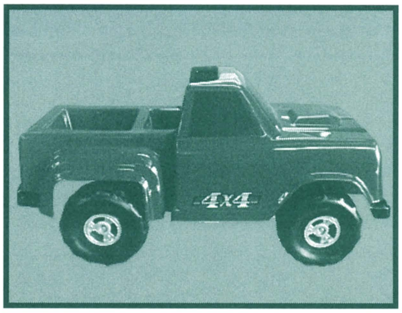

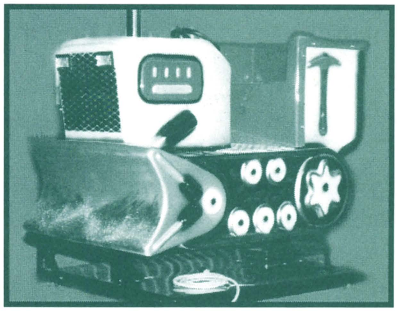

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Buckeye Building
Ohio State Fairgrounds
17th Avenue & I-71 Exit 111
Cellular: 614-271-7626
At Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866

19
Des Moines, IA
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For information call
Tom Rhoades
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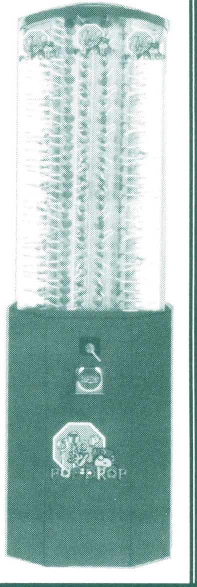

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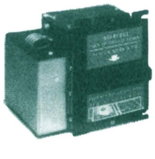

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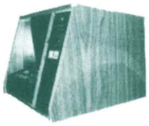

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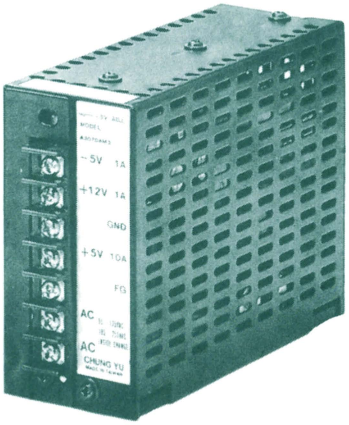

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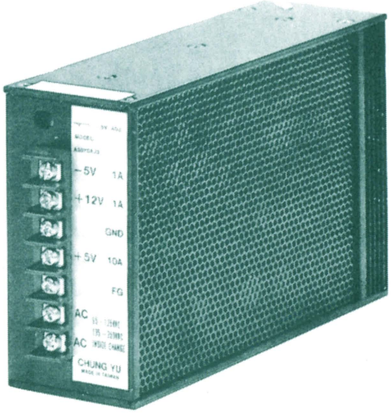

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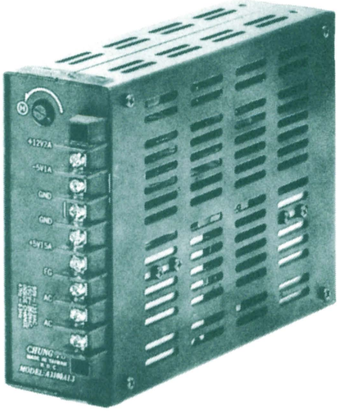

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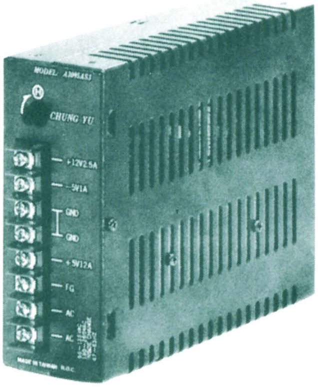

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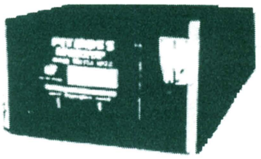

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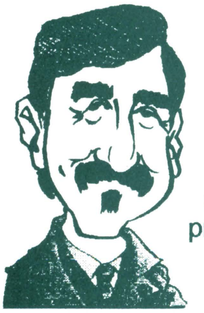

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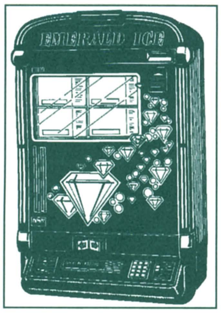

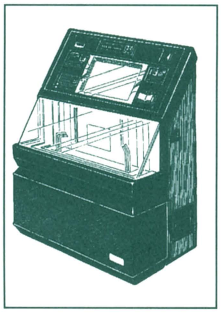

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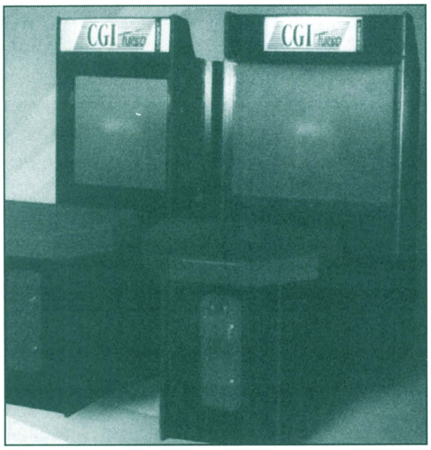

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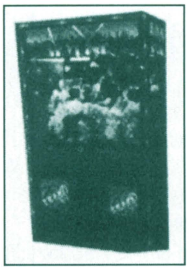

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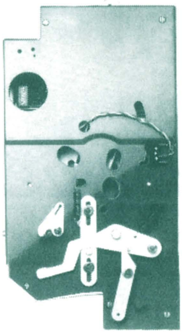

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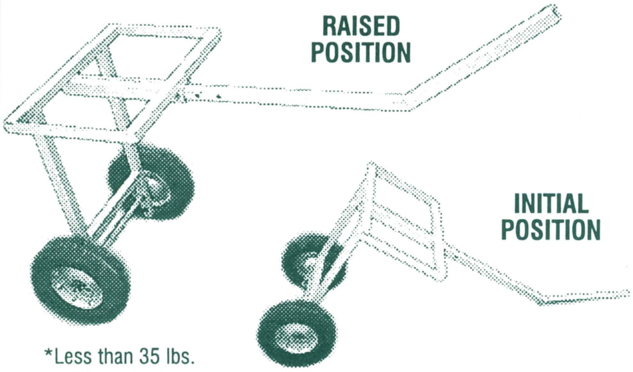

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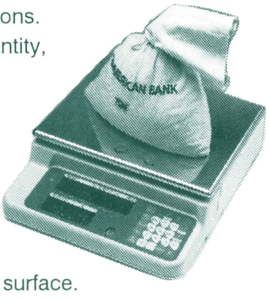

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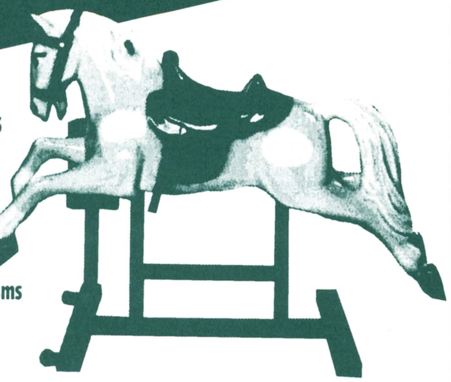

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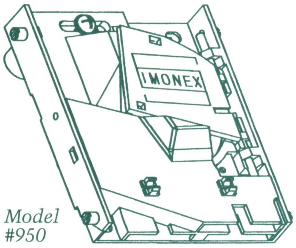
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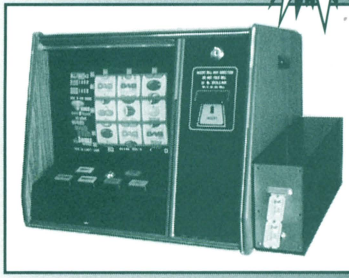

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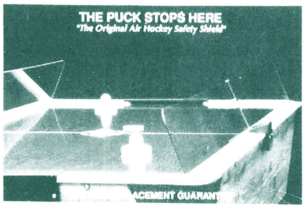

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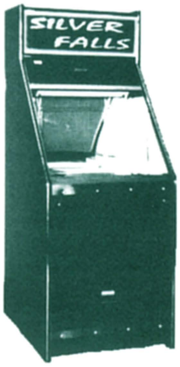

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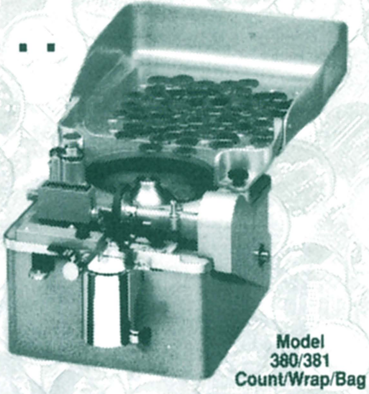
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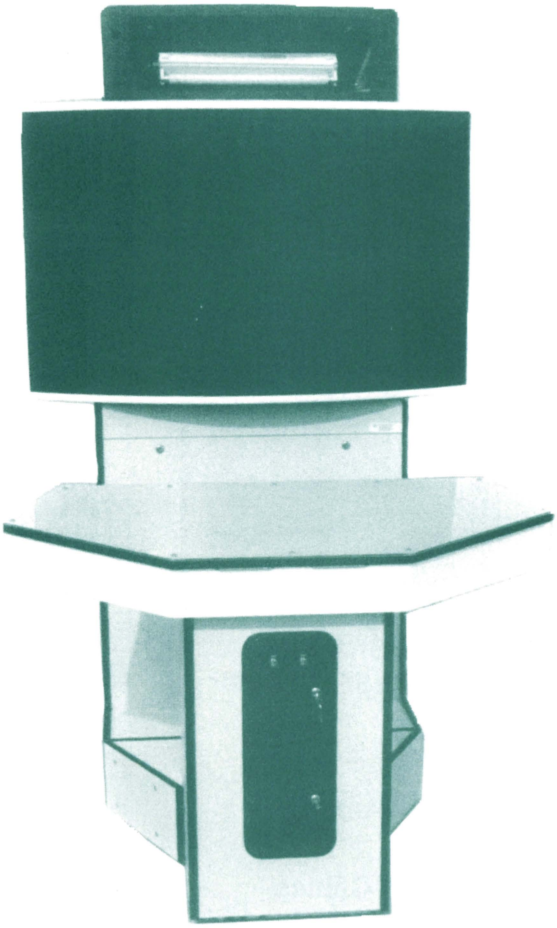

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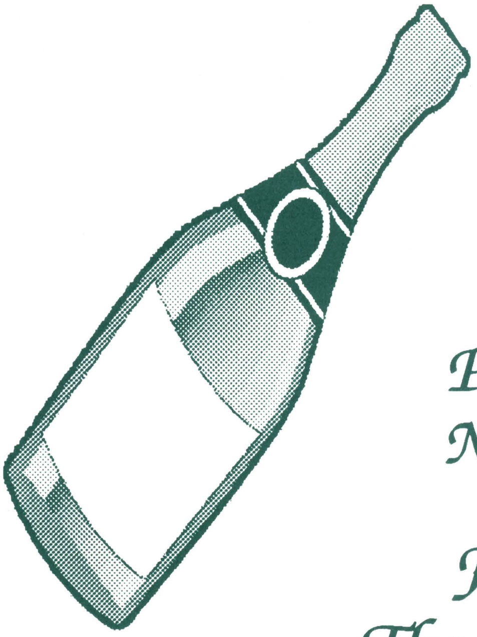

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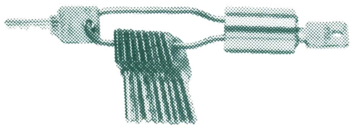

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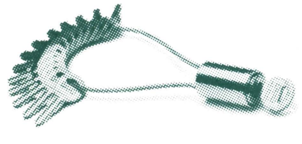

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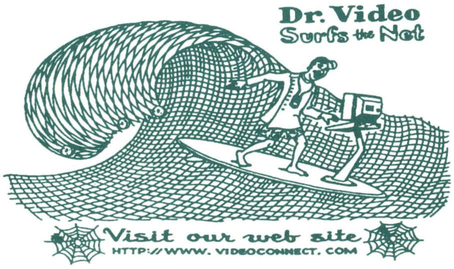
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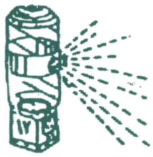

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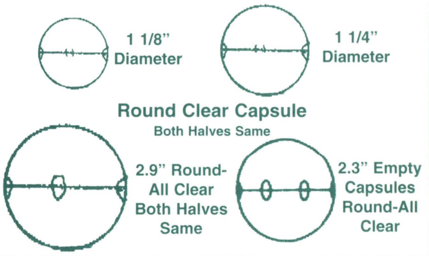
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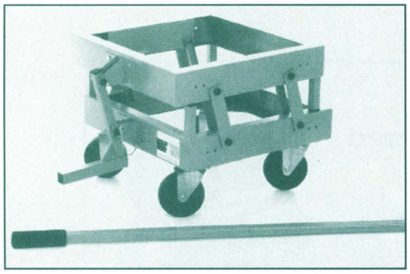

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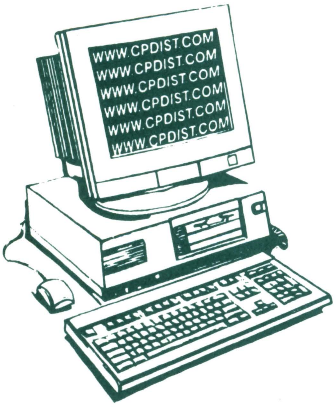

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- 16-Bit Sound Card
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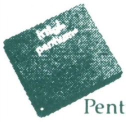

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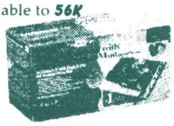

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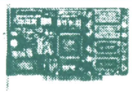

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	3	7	"Unidos Para Siempre"	Los Tigres Del Norte
	4	--	"Me Nacio Del Alma"	Conjunto Primavera
	5	--	"Corridos Perrones 1"	Exterminador
	6	6	"Y Sus Canciones"	Vicente Fernandez
	7	2	"La Reina De Las Bandas"	Banda Machos
	8	5	"Tu Eterno Enamorado"	Banda Maguey
	9	10	"Orgullo Rancero"	Ezequiel Pena
	10	--	"Invencible"	Los Rieleros Del Norte
TROPICAL/SALSA	1	6	"Destino"	Rey Ruiz
	2	--	"Merengeu En Calle 8 '96"	Compilation
	3	--	"A Mil"	La Makina
	4	1	"Fresco"	Jerry Rivera
	5	--	"Salsa En Calle 8 '96"	Compilation
	6	3	"Abriendo Puertas"	Gloria Estefan
	7	10	"Esclava De Tu Piel"	Azucar Moreno
	8	2	"Salsa Hot Hits #3"	Compilation
	9	7	"Mas Rika Que Nunca"	Rikarena
	10	9	"Etnia"	Grupo Niche
POP	1	4	"Siempre Selena"	Selena
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	3	--	"El Deseo De Oir Tu Voz"	Cristian
	4	1	"En Pleno Vuelo"	Marco Antonio Solis
	5	5	"Enrique Iglesias"	Enrique Iglesias
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January 16-18

Leisurexpo '97, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact Al Barry, (305)448-7976; fax (305)448-4630.

January 25-26

Orlando Collectors Expo, Orlando Fairgrounds, Orlando, Fla. Contact Chip Nofal, (904)928-0666 phone and fax.

March 6-8

South Carolina Coin Operators Association Convention and Trade Show, Sheraton Hotel and Convention Center, Columbia, S.C. Contact Helen Sikes, (803)345-2048; fax (803)345-1051.

March 13-15

Amusement Showcase Intl., Sands Expo Center, Contact William T. Glasgow Inc., (708)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.

April 17-19

National Automatic Merchandising Association Western Convention and Exhibit, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact NAMA, (312)346-0370; fax (312)704-4140.

May 23-31

17th VNEA International Championships, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact VNEA, (800)544-1346 or (517)893-1800; fax (517)893-0103.

June 12-14

Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators Association Convention and Trade Show, Holiday Inn SunSpree, Oconomowoc, Wis. Contact Maxine O'Brien, (608)836-6090; fax (608)836-3890.

July 11-13

7th VNEA International Junior Championships, Sioux City Convention Center, Sioux City, Iowa. Contact VNEA, (800)544-1346 or (517)893-1800; fax (517)893-0103.

For international events, see "International Scene," page 44.

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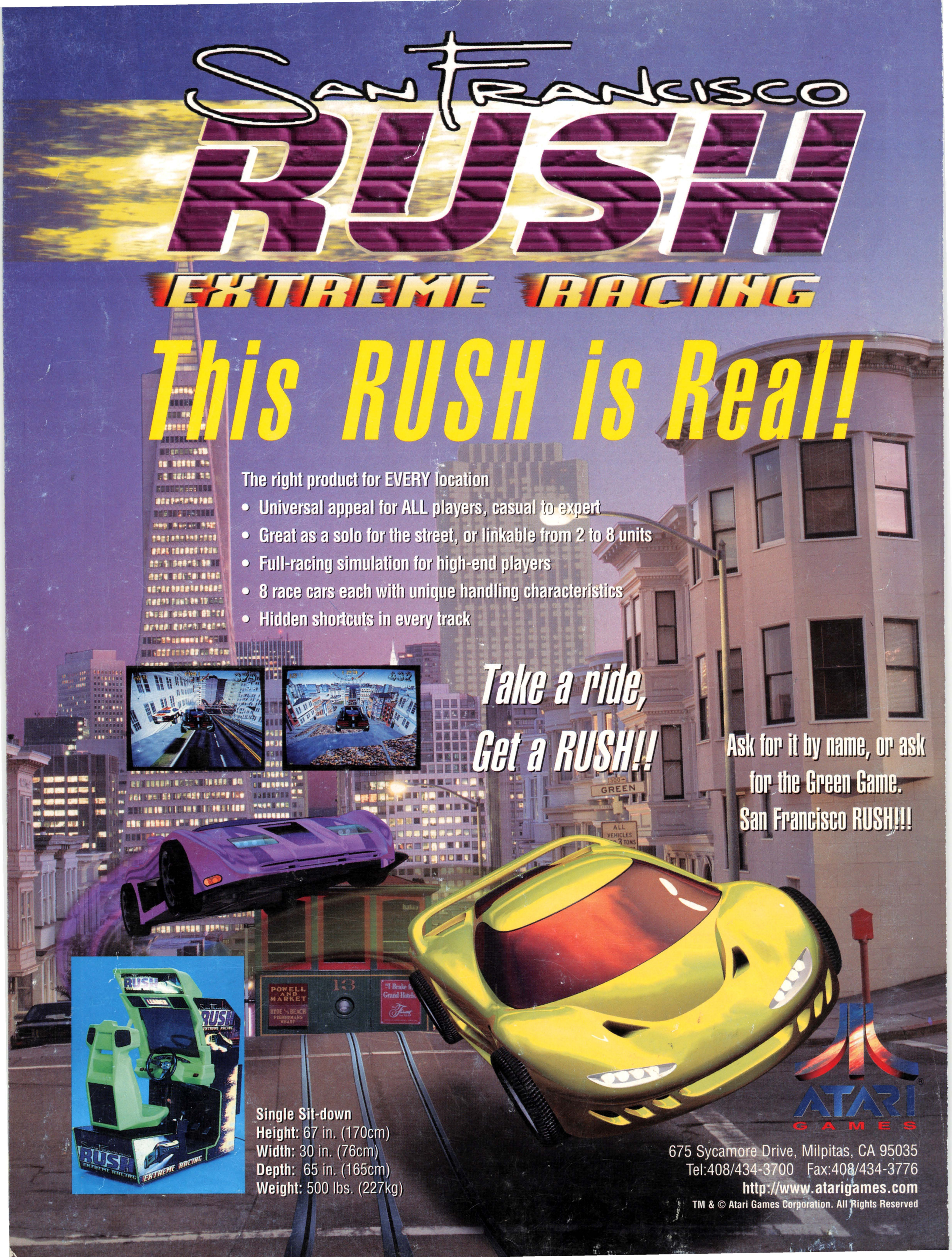
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